

Turkey accuses neighbours of arming, training rebel Kurds

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey on Friday accused Syria and five other nearby states of equipping rebel Turkish Kurds with anti-aircraft missiles that it said had downed two Turkish army helicopters during anti-Kurd operations in northern Iraq.

"Our intelligence units have verified that Syria in the first place, and Iran, Greece, Serbia, the Greek-Cypriot administration in south Cyprus and Armenia have been playing a role in equipping the separatist terrorists with missiles and training them," a senior Turkish general said.

Major-General Erol Ozkaskan, armed forces secretary general, told a news conference that two Turkish helicopters recently lost over northern Iraq were brought down by Russian-made SAM-7B missiles fired by the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK).

It was the first time the Turkish army admitted that its aircraft had been downed by the PKK.

"The PKK has acquired the SAM-7B capability only very recently," Gen. Ozkaskan said.

He said the missiles that brought down a U.S.-made Super Cobra attack helicopter on May 18 and a French-German made Cougar utility helicopter on June 4 were understood to have been received in Armenia and transferred to northern Iraq via Iran.

The PKK still has between 50 and 60 of these missiles," Gen. Ozkaskan added.

Thirteen Turkish soldiers, including 10 officers, were killed in the two crashes.

The general's accusations came amid an ongoing Turkish military incursion into northern Iraq to wipe out PKK bases in a joint campaign with Ankara's Iraqi Kurdish allies, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP).

He said the Turkish foreign ministry had been notified regarding the alleged help by Turkey's neighbours to the PKK.

Gen. Ozkaskan accused

Iran of continuing other assistance to the PKK. "Nearly 700 terrorists fleeing the Turkish operation in northern Iraq have fled to Iran and many injured PKK members are receiving medical treatment in that country," he said.

He also claimed the more than 25,000 Turkish troops had also captured several important PKK bases in northern Iraq since entering the region on May 14.

"Our forces have gained full control of terrorist bases in Sinath, Khafanin, the Bihayr mountain, Beyazdag, Haruna, Metina, Zap and the Gara Mountain and are continuing with mopping up operations," Gen. Ozkaskan said.

Since May 14, 2,252 members of the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) have been killed in northern Iraq, he said, adding 95 members of the Turkish security forces had also died.

The PKK maintains its losses are less than 100.

"The Turkish operation will continue until the ter-

rorists are eradicated and Mr. (Massud) Barzani's KDP forces gain full control of the areas cleared from the terrorists," Gen. Ozkaskan said.

"The operation is only against the separatist terrorists and is not aimed against any other country or group in the region," he said.

The PKK, which has been fighting the Ankara government for a Kurdish homeland in southeast Turkey since 1984, uses northern Iraq as a rear base in attacking targets inside Turkish territory.

Last month, the KDP cleared the main northern Iraqi city of Arbil from the PKK.

Iran and the Arab states have condemned the Turkish incursion, urging Ankara to pull back its troops from northern Iraq immediately.

Turkey maintains that it respects Iraq's territorial integrity despite the incursion.



VICTORY OVER THE ISLAMISTS: Supporters of President Liamine Zerroual's National Democratic Rally rejoice as Friday's Algerian parliamentary election results turn out in their favour (Photo by AFP)

Israeli officer suspended over Poland tour scandal

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli colonel who led a group of army officers on an official tour in Poland which took in Nazi death camps by day and casinos by night has been suspended, military sources said Thursday.

The officer headed a delegation of around 60 cadets from the army's School of High Command on the educational tour, which scandalised Israel when news leaked out of their gambling and other activities.

Israeli television and radio

reported Thursday that the officers played cards on their way to and from visits to the infamous death camps of Auschwitz and Treblinka as well as the former Warsaw ghetto, and enjoyed themselves in casinos at night.

Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai ordered an immediate investigation into the officers' actions, while Avner Shalev, director of the Yad Vashem memorial to the Jews who died in the Holocaust, condemned their "lack of sensitivity."

Saudi pilot rescues stranded Jumbo 747

MADRAS (AFP) — A Saudia Boeing 747 was flown out from a tiny Indian military airbase Friday, five days after it landed there mistaking it for a nearby international airport, officials said.

Air Force officers at the Tambaram base, some 10 kilometres from the city of Madras, said the plane took off at 4:48 p.m. and landed safely at Madras' Meenam-bakkam International Airport nine minutes later.

Jam Joom, Saudia's chief test pilot, managed to take the plane off the ground in just 3,500 feet, they said.

Witnesses said some 300 air force personnel and journalists broke into spontaneous applause when plane took off.

An officer at the Tambaram, a flight training institute, said the Boeing had been short of its toilets, pantry sections and seats and much of its fuel and towed to the main runway, 5,853 feet long, at 1:00 p.m.

Groom, parents killed in car accident en route to wedding

JERICHO, West Bank (AP) — An Israeli groom, his parents and two friends were killed en route to the wedding when their car veered off the road and overturned in the West Bank, radio reports said Friday.

The five had disappeared on Thursday, setting off a massive search amid suspicions they might have been kidnapped and killed by Palestinian militants.

Throughout the night, Israeli and Palestinian forces combed the mostly barren

Jordan Valley. Israeli troops, backed by helicopters and tracking dogs, set up roadblocks and checked passing Palestinian vehicles. The searches focused on several Arab villages north of the autonomous town of Jericho.

The five had left Jerusalem on Thursday afternoon and were headed north, toward a communal agricultural settlement near Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee, where the wedding was to take place. The road from Jerusalem to Tiberias runs largely through the West

Bank's Jordan Valley.

When the groom had failed to arrive Thursday evening, police and army were alerted by Abraham Burg, head of the Jewish agency and a relative of the groom. "I don't remember such an intense drama," Mr. Burg told Israel Radio.

The accident occurred near the Jewish settlement of Argaman, about 20 kilometres north of Jericho. The car veered off the road, overturned and fell beneath a bridge.

Iran criticises exclusion of Islamists from Algerian polls

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran on Friday criticised the exclusion of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) from Algeria's elections, saying the ban threw into question the legitimacy of the polls.

"Can a poll without the participation of the FIS be considered an election," said Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, Iran's most senior judicial official, during weekly

prayers at Tehran University.

"Worldwide oppression has dragged down the natural and undeniable rights of the Islamists in Algeria who won the last elections and were put out of power by a dictatorial regime," he said.

Algerians went to the polls on Thursday to elect a new legislature amid a massive security clamp down, and results from the polls were

expected later Friday.

FIS, which was poised to win the last elections that were aborted by the army in January 1992, was banned from taking part in the polls and its exiled leaders called on Algerians to boycott them.

Since the cancellation of the 1992 polls, Islamist militants have waged a bloody campaign against the security services, with both sides

committing atrocities. An estimated 60,000 people have died in the violence.

Iran and Algeria have hardly had any ties since the aborted 1992 polls, with Tehran refusing to recognise the legitimacy of the 1995 presidential elections in Algeria and in favour of the creation of an Islamic state in the country.

Israeli, U.S. officials to meet over airline dispute

TEL AVIV (AP) — The Israeli airline El Al has been barred from operating direct flights to three major U.S. cities as part of a dispute over flight rights, media reported Friday.

The U.S. Department of Transportation banned El Al from expanding its U.S. service to Orlando, Dallas/Fort Worth and Wash-

ington, D.C./Baltimore after Israel prevented the U.S. charter carrier Tower Air from launching a Tel Aviv-Athens-New York route, the Jerusalem Post daily said.

Israeli and U.S. transportation officials were to meet Friday to try and solve the dispute.

Israel's Civil Aviation

Authority apparently will allow Tower Air to begin its Tel Aviv-Athens-New York route only in October, rather than during the summer season, because the request arrived late, the Post said.

The newspaper quoted U.S. officials as saying the decision to ban the El Al flights came after efforts

through diplomatic channels failed to change Israel's policy regarding Tower Air.

El Al spokesman Nachman Kleiman said El Al would keep its commitment to fly passengers to Orlando and Baltimore but would have to land first in New York before continuing the service.

Syrians despair of returning to Golan, 30 years on from war

By Wadiah El Helou
AFP

QUNEITRA, Syria — Syrians driven from the Golan Heights in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war mark 30 years of Israeli occupation this week with their hopes of returning home at an all-time low.

Two years ago, swept along by euphoria surrounding the peace process, Syrians believed Israel's dovish Prime Minister Shimon Peres was on the verge of giving them back the Golan as part of a peace deal.

"They were packing their suitcases to return to their villages in the Golan, occupied since 1967, after encouraging

news on the progress of peace negotiations," said Mohammad Mokbel, mayor of the Syrian-controlled town of Quneitra.

But an Islamist suicide bombing campaign in Israel in early 1996 wrecked the negotiations, brought down Mr. Peres and led to the Israeli election victory of right-wing hardliner Benjamin Netanyahu.

Mr. Netanyahu has said he will not hand back the strategic Golan and the talks have remained in deep freeze.

Of the territories it captured from June 5 to 10, 1967, Israel has handed back the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt and parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Palestinian

self-rule. But all the Syrians have to show for the 30 years which have elapsed is Quneitra, returned under a disengagement accord in 1974. Once a bustling town of 50,000, it is now a ghost town, visited by the occasional tourist.

Mr. Mokbel said the Syrian authorities have kept the town as a "testimony to Israel's savagery," accusing the Jewish state of destroying it before handing it back.

Instead of returning to their villages, Golan inhabitants have to resort to swapping news with relatives left on the Israeli side of the ceasefire line using a megaphone across a so-called "valley of

tears."

"There is huge nostalgia here," Mr. Mokbel said. Inhabitants are drawn to the ceasefire line each spring to peer through the barbed wire at their old homes.

Inhabitants tell the story of Abu Ahmad, who died last week having talked all his life of returning one day to his native village, which has been bulldozed by Israel.

Another vows to "walk" home to the Golan one day, saying he felt as if he was in exile even living in Damascus.

Under the 1974 disengagement accord, Syria recovered a small slice of land occupied by Israel in the 1973 Mid-

dle East war and another captured in June 1967 including Quneitra.

This amounted to 663 square kilometres out of a total of 1,860 square kilometres occupied by Israel, and Mr. Mokbel complained it was "pasture land, unlike the more fertile land" kept by the Jewish state.

But the Syrian press keeps up a defiant front. As Israel celebrates the anniversary of its stunning triumph in 1967, the press hailed the 1973 war as "the riposte to the failure in the 1967 war."

"Arabs will never give up their land," one newspaper said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:20 Finals Ladies (Live from Paris)
18:00 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Hangin' With Mr. Cooper
20:00 Feature film — "Kindergarten Cop"
20:00 Magazine Zero One
22:00 News in English
22:25 MacGyver
23:15 Feature film — Visions of Murder

PRAYER TIMES

03:51 Fajr
05:25 (Sunrise) Dhuha
12:24 Dhuhur
16:15 Asr
19:44 Maghrib
21:18 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifheh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Sante Church Tel. 661636

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622766

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armanian International Church Tel. 827126

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824828

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675091

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Gradual rise in temperatures is expected today with moderate

weather conditions prevailing

and winds northeasterly moderate.

In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 17/32

Aqaba 24/38

Deserts 15/35

Jordan Valley 23/38

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 29 Aqaba 35 Humidity

readings: Amman 33 per cent.

Aqaba 27 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Bassam Karadsheh 759200

Dr. Ramzi Mazzawi 894788

Dr. Salman Daboubi 776751

Dr. Khalid Abdo 657129

Firas pharmacy 661912

Ferdous pharmacy 778336

Al Asena pharmacy 637055

Natroukh pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 347632

IRBID:

Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir 276852

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Samir Al Lawzi 989601

Khalifeh pharmacy 985176

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Price Complaints 605800

Hotel Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Company 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Husseini Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6

Akileh Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636161

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Musasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775117/26

Army, Marka 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 60240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09983323

Zarqa National Hospital 091900560

Ibn Sina Hospital 09986732

Al Hikam Modern Hospital 09990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital 021275555

Greek Catholic Hospital 021272275

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital 021247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital 031314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA

INTERNATIONAL

AIRPORT

This information is supplied by

Royal Jordanian (RJ) information

department at the Queen Alia

International Airport Tel.

(08)53200 where it should

always be verified. Information

on other flights is obtained on

telephone (08) 52700 or (08)

523250.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights



His Majesty King Hussein prays at a new mosque which he opened Thursday at Muta University during his visit to the Karak area (photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

Children through his lense Tanuma captures cultures in faces

By Lola Kellani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Believing that "children are the mirror of society," Japanese photographer Takeyshi Tanuma has travelled the world's continents to capture the faces of children on film, and now these faces are on display in Jordan.

The 68-year-old photographer, whose pictures reflect a common childhood despite political borders, is a winner of six photographic awards.

He had travelled to 106 countries to prove that "cultural borders" around the world are becoming less distinct, according to the organisers of the exhibition.

The exhibition, entitled "Children of the Planet Earth," has 90 pictures of children playing, crying, laughing or just being children.

"The appearance of children at times earnest, at times energetic brings us the message that the world is one," according to a statement by the Japan Foundation, which organised the event in cooperation with the Embassy of Japan, the Ministry of Culture and Youth and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Held under the patronage



Photo by Takeyshi Tanuma

of HRH Princess Aisha Bent Al Hussein, the exhibition is on display at the Haya Cultural Centre. It will travel around the Middle East, starting in Jordan then go on to Lebanon, Egypt, Oman, Qatar and Israel.

"Although people might find themselves in different

circumstances, children around the world play, learn and cry in pretty much the same way. Without the a care or any inkling of greed, children capture our hearts with only the look in their eyes," say the organisers.

The exhibition will run until June 12.

WHAT'S GOING ON PLAY

* "Jadara Shines Anew" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by Abdul Basit Naqqash and Sa'd Hussein entitled "Heritage and Culture" at the gallery of the Jordan Plastic Artists Association, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 21.

* Exhibition on "The Beauty of the Jordanian Environment" by Omar Bassoul at the Royal Cultural Centre, until June 12.

* Art exhibition by Ibrahim Al Abdali at the Orient Art Gallery, Shmeisani, Issam Ajlouni Street, until June 19.

* Paintings by Yassin Shakir at Hamourabi Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5536098) until June 15.

* Works by Guy Fetter at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 15.

* Works by Issam Tantaoui at Al Husson Gallery, Irbid (Tel. 02/242680), until June 10.

* Spring Exhibition of Plastic Art '97 at Greater Amman Municipality, Ras Al 'Ain, until June 30.

CABLECO plans to lay off 100 employees 'Decision prompted by government award of contract to foreign firm'

By Ghalia Alul
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The National Cable and Wire Manufacturing (CABLECO), which last week lost a JD 3.5 million contract to a Bahraini company, stands to lay off 100 of its 250 employees, Chairman of the Board of Directors and the company's General Manager Mohammad Zurkiyeh said Friday.

The government last week awarded the Mital Company of Bahrain the JD 3.5 million contract to supply overhead cables for a 400-kilovolt power linkage between Jordan and Syria.

According to officials, CABLECO was not qualified to supply such cables.

In a statement issued Wednesday, Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki said the company failed to prove that it has obtained sufficient experience for the work in question.

Rejecting the government's position, Mr. Zurkiyeh said CABLECO was awarded the ISO 9002 certificate 15 months ago and thus is capable of producing the cables.

"The government was exaggerating when it said that producing this kind of cables was difficult. It is not like producing a nuclear bomb," stressed Mr. Zurkiyeh.

He told the Jordan Times Friday that this is not the first time CABLECO loses

large contracts to foreign companies. The recent contract award, he said, makes the lay off of workers imperative.

"The company depends on foreign markets, and because of the lack of such contracts we had to make the decision to lay off some of our employees," he added.

In an advertisement CABLECO printed in all the Arabic dailies Wednesday, the company criticised the government's decision and charged that obstacles have been placed in the progress and the operations of the local company at a time when neighbouring countries continue to provide backing for their national industries.

"It seems that our share in our local market has been reduced to a minimal portion of what the foreign companies are offered at a time when we are in urgent need for contracts to keep our factories operating," the statement said.

Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Mohammad Hourani was not available for comment on Friday. But according to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Hourani said CABLECO cannot meet the technical and financial requirements agreed upon with countries concerned, including Syria, Turkey, Egypt, Iraq and Jordan, as well as the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development which will

finance the project.

According to the contract awarded to the Mital Company, the Bahraini firm will supply the cables required for an electric power linkage project between Jordan and Syria. The cables, Mital will provide, will be installed on Jordanian territory.

The power linkage project is part of a larger regional scheme designed to connect the power supplies of Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Egypt and Iraq.

Mr. Zurkiyeh, who said the company is studying who will be laid off and when, stopped short of saying whether any further measures will be taken following the downsizing of CABLECO's staff.

Associations retract on move to reject effective date of overtime pay

By Lola Kellani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — After some initial controversy, the Federation of Professional Associations (FPA) general assembly yesterday retracted its move to reject the government decision involving the effective date of overtime allowances and voted to accept the cabinet judgement.

The professional associations last week had threatened to carry out a general strike in reaction to the government decision to grant public health employees new overtime allowances as of June 1 rather than retroactively to January 1, 1997.

But during Friday's meeting, scheduled to discuss measures the Jordan Medical Association (JMA) and other associations intend to take, the association presidents read out their recommendations which included continuing the dialogue with the government provided three conditions are implemented.

"We recommend continuing the negotiations of the joint ministerial associations committee for at least one month," said FPA Chairman Abdul Rahman Issa.

As for the association's conditions, the first includes: implementing the

overtime allowances granting pharmacists a 100 per cent increase, nurses a 75 per cent increase and doctors a 60 per cent increase as of June 1, 1997, and granting engineers the technical allowance of 120 per cent as of January 1, 1998.

The above condition simply calls for the implementation of the new allowances already set by the government last month.

A JMA source told the Jordan Times that the associations did not retreat in their case with the government.

He explained that at a meeting held Wednesday evening between JMA representatives and Minister of Health Ashraf Kurdi, the

JMA was made to understand that the application of retroactive allowances was illegal.

"Dr. Kurdi in fact sees that the increase is minimal and promised to improve other conditions in the next six months," said the source who preferred anonymity.

But when this first condition was read out, some public health doctors shouted in anger at their colleagues saying that the FPA was ignoring their demands and not working in their interest.

Yet when the motion was put to a vote, it received the green light.

The second condition was to raise nurses' overtime

allowances from the government-promised 75 per cent to 90 per cent and to grant journalists a 90 per cent overtime allowance.

The third condition was to grant other associations such as the veterinarians, agricultural engineers, pharmacists and geologists interest groups a 120 per cent overtime allowances as of January 1, 1998.

The presidents of the FPA associations were granted one month by the general assembly to convince the government to take these conditions into account.

'Civil servant allowances to be reviewed'

IRBID (Petra) — Minister of Social Development Mohammad Mamsar told civil servants in Irbid Governorate Thursday that the government will reconsider all kinds of allowances for its employees after a thorough study is conducted in preparation for next year's fiscal budget.

Dr. Mamsar, who was speaking to directors of social development departments said the ministry will implement the social security package aiming to rehabilitate and find income generation opportunities for underprivileged families.

He said the ministry plans to stop paying cash assistance to those persons able to work, saying that such assistance will be restricted to those who qualify.

TRAFFIC DAY: Assistant Public Security Department (PSD) Director for Traffic Affairs Major General Abdul Raouf Hussein Friday takes part in a march organised by the department in cooperation with the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents (JSPRA) to mark International Traffic Day and Arab Traffic Week. The march, held under the theme of "Road accidents kill," kicked off from the Jordan Sports Federation for the Handicapped in Arjan area, and wound up at the starting line. Taking part in the march were senior traffic department officers, and members of the JSPRA. At the end of the march, Director of the Drivers and Vehicles Licensing Department Col. Mustafa Freihah presented the march trophy to Maj. Gen. Hussein (photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)



New study says water crisis could worsen in 20 years

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's water demands will double in the coming 20 years, and its water crisis will worsen unless proper measures are taken to ensure new resources, says a recent study.

According to the study, conducted by the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, the country's population will double by the year 2020, and the total water deficit by then will be 293 million cubic metres (MCM).

The study says that by year 2000 Jordan's population will reach 5.11 million with a total water production reaching 952 MCM per year, of which 325 MCM will

be allocated for non-agricultural uses (NAU) (drinking and industrial uses) and 627 MCM for irrigation purposes.

Therefore, the water deficit will account for 233 MCM.

The study shows increases in demands as well as deficits in resources in five year increments until the year 2020.

By the year 2020, according to the study, Jordan's population will reach 9.27 million, with water production totalling 1,200 MCM, of which 482 MCM will be allocated for NAU and 718 MCM for irrigation purposes.

Water demand will reach 1,493 MCM, with 758 MCM for NAU and 735 MCM for irrigation purposes.

Thus the water deficit will account for 293 MCM, the study says, or 60 MCM more in deficit than in the year 2000.

"The Kingdom's annual production of water varies from one time to another because it depends largely on rain," says Elias Salameh, a water expert and professor of hydrology at the University of Jordan.

According to Dr. Salameh, the Kingdom's average consumption is 950 MCM per annum. About 550 to 570 MCM comes from underground water resources and 400 MCM from surface water resources (dams, valleys, water projects), he says.

Between 60-70 MCM

can be obtained from semi-salt water that can be used after treatment, Dr. Salameh adds.

According to Dr. Salameh, 650 MCM to 750 MCM is considered to be the annual safe production of water while about 200 MCM comes from the Kingdom's water reserves.

He adds that at least 650 MCM are channelled for agricultural purposes, 220 MCM for drinking uses and 45 to 50 MCM for industrial purposes.

The professor said that 50 to 55 per cent of the total consumption of water is wasted because of the old and leaky water networks and illegal consumption.

Ministry study figures show that the consumption in 1995 reached

879 MCM with 499 MCM coming from underground basins and 380 MCM from surface basins. About 472 MCM went to agricultural uses, 240 MCM for drinking purposes, 33 MCM for industry and 9.5 MCM for secluded areas.

Secretary General Quasir Qataishat said the ministry was able to meet 75 per cent of Jordan's water needs, adding that 75 per cent of 1996 water consumption went for agriculture, 22 per cent for drinking and 3 per cent for industry.

A report by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) indicates that the best long-term solution to the water crisis in Jordan is

"improving water resources administration and upgrading the quality of water that is obtained through treated sewage water for reuse."

The report calls for Jordan to reach water agreements with neighbouring countries such as Turkey and Israel to ensure more water sharing and joint regional water projects.

Water problems exist in Jordan because of "the inefficient water administration, lack of ability to treat sewage water and the unsuitable water pricing policy in Jordan," the USAID report says.

Minister of Water and Irrigation Munther Haddadin proposes several solutions to the water crisis in Jordan which

focus on restructuring of water networks, digging more water wells for drinking and industry purposes and raising the efficiency of the Deir Alla project to 65 MCM by the year 2000.

Dr. Haddadin also proposed erecting a transfer dam on the Yarmouk River, coordinating with Israel on ways to obtain an additional 30 MCM, establishing more water treatment plants, implementing more water saving schemes,

improving the efficiency of water administration and raising funds for water projects in the Kingdom.

According to the Jordan-Israel peace treaty, the Kingdom should receive 50 MCM per

annum with an additional 50 MCM through joint water projects. Last month Israel started pumping 30 MCM from Lake Tiberias to King Abdullah Canal.

According to Dr. Haddadin, Jordanian citizen's annual share of water resources reaches 170 cubic metres (CM) of renewable water compared to 100,000 CM for Canadians, 4,000 CM for Iraqis, 1,400 CM for Egyptians.

The deficit in the annual share of a Jordanian (86 per cent of his needs today) is translated into two symptoms: the rationing and rotational system of domestic water service. Dr. Haddadin wrote in a recent article.

Sri Lankan forces close in on key northern town

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan troops driving into Tamil Tiger guerrilla territory in the north resumed their advance Friday, closing in on a key junction town from the east and south, security officials said. Troops, backed by tanks, artillery and air support, were moving towards the heavily fortified town of Puliyanakulam, about 245 kilometres north of the capital Colombo, in the mostly jungle-covered Wanni region, they said.

"Troops resumed their advance further northwards from the earlier held positions at first light today," a Defence Ministry statement said Friday.

"Satisfactory progress has been made so far and the terrorists are expected to resist the advancing troops," it said, adding the rebels had fired mortars at the troops.

Residents in Vavuniya, the gateway to the Wanni some 35 kilometres to the south

of Puliyanakulam, reported hearing aircraft heading for the battlefield and the sound of artillery shells exploding in the distance. The security forces resumed their advance from positions near Omathai, 14 kilometres north of Vavuniya, and Nedunkeni, 40 kilometres northeast of Vavuniya. They captured the two towns after an offensive codenamed Operation Jaya Sikuru, or "Sure Of Victory," launched from Vavuniya on May 13 in a bid to open a supply route to the Jaffna peninsula, 100 kilometres further north.

Vavuniya lies 220 kilometres north of the capital Colombo.

Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte told parliament Thursday the government was determined to go ahead with its plans to reopen the land route through the Wanni, linking Jaffna peninsula with the rest of the country.

The north-south highway has been closed for more than 10 years due to fighting between the rebels and government forces.

Military officials said the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who have resisted the army's advance, had vacated at least two bases along the path government troops were taking as they edged north. But the LTTE, fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in mainly Sinhalese Sri Lanka's north and east, accused the military in an overnight statement of systematically demolishing Tamil towns in the north.

The statement said buildings in Nedunkeni, which the troops captured after fierce fighting last month, had been blown up by the military.

"A concerted dismembering of Tamil society (town by town) is taking place, where Tamils' lifeline and self-sufficiency is progres-

sively weakened by the Sinhala government," it said.

The rebels earlier said the military was firing artillery at thickly-populated towns 32 kilometres away from its forward defences, forcing civilians to abandon their homes and seek refuge in the jungle.

The military has denied their shells were aimed at civilians, saying they fired only at identified rebel targets.

The rebels also said Tamil property and food were looted by the armed forces at Nedunkeni, but the Defence Ministry spokesman denied the charge.

Independent confirmation of the events was not possible as international media have not been allowed in the war zone.

The government says more than 50,000 people have been killed since the war began in 1983. The rebels say the toll is higher.

Foreign policy marks starting positions for next U.S. elections

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Contenders in the race to be the first U.S. president of the next century are staking out their positions as they toe the starting line, and foreign policy is dominating the early debates.

Already in the battle to succeed President Bill Clinton in 2000 are Vice-President Al Gore and House Democratic leader Richard Gephardt, who duked it out last week over renewing Beijing's most favoured nation (MFN) trade status.

Mr. Gephardt, who rebelled earlier this year by voting against Mr. Clinton's budget, opposes the president's decision to maintain normal trade relations with China, whose government he denounced as "a tyranny that debases the dignity of one-fifth of the human race."

Mr. Gore delivered a trade address the day of Mr. Gephardt's attack, defending Mr. Clinton's policy of engagement with China as the only hope of influencing Beijing, sure to be one of the biggest U.S. concerns in the 21st century.

Mr. Gephardt, a boyish-looking southern lawmaker like Mr. Gore, may next try to distinguish himself from the White House duo by raising questions about the administration's drive to include Chile in a regional trade pact.

Congress is soon to consider "fast track" authority for Chile's membership in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) joining the United States, Mexico and Canada.

Many Democrats fiercely opposed NAFTA, charging it would hurt labour and the environment, and Mr. Gephardt intends to raise those issues again, his aide said.

"He doesn't support fast track unless the environment and labour safeguards are factored in," said spokesman Eric Smith, who hinted that Mr. Gephardt may also make trouble over Clinton's cherished goal to expand NATO.

The Missouri representative and 1988 White House contender "has concerns on

the cost and the reaction of the Russians," Mr. Smith said, adding, however, that Mr. Gephardt generally supports NATO expansion.

So far, no one on the Republican side has such clear designs on the White House as Mr. Gephardt and Mr. Gore, but the favourite target for speculation is the wildly popular former top military chief, Colin Powell.

Like Mr. Gephardt, the black general set himself apart by breaking with party members, first backing the Affirmative Action Programme for hiring minorities and then supporting the chemical weapons ban.

Other foreign policy issues would likely dominate a Powell platform given his military background, and they may also surface in the expected bids from immigration-foe Pat Buchanan and anti-NAFTA Ross Perot.

With the economy booming and the crime rate dropping, politicians are apparently looking overseas for inspiration.

Political analyst Norman Ornstein said that zeroing in on foreign policy issues may be a good strategy as those areas are credited with the surprising support for Mr. Perot and Mr. Buchanan.

He also noted that Mr. Gephardt has long had a populist protectionist stance, it's his emphasis that's changed.

"As a member of the leadership then he took a less visible role and downplayed his differences with the party," said the American Enterprise Institute expert. "Now clearly he's not downplaying anything."

"Gephardt is trying to find his sea legs for a possible presidential run and so he's doing the politics he thinks he needs to do," agreed a White House official who declined to be named.

But Ornstein, a longtime congressional watcher, said he found Mr. Gephardt's tactics bordering on heresy.

"As strategies go, I think it's unfortunate that someone who is top in Congress would take positions that are so much in conflict with that party's president," he said.

Kohl thanks U.S. for rebuilding Europe

WASHINGTON (R) — Chancellor Helmut Kohl, taking a break from political turmoil at home, has formally thanked the United States for its help rebuilding Europe after the World War II and reuniting Germany after the cold war.

Mr. Kohl, speaking at ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan that provided billions of U.S. dollars for European reconstruction, said "the massive aid programme set Europe on a course of peace and prosperity."

"And the route he charted has not come to an end. We are currently on our way toward building step-by-step this common European house," Mr. Kohl said, speaking through an interpreter.

He delivered his remarks at a wreath-laying ceremony for former Secretary of State George Marshall, architect of the plan, at Arlington National Cemetery, across the Potomac River from Washington.

Accompanied by former President Gerald Ford and Defence Secretary William Cohen, Mr. Kohl placed a wreath on Marshall's grave and helped plant an oak tree.

Mr. Kohl said maintaining the trans-Atlantic alliance between Europe and the United States remained cru-

cial to Germany and all of Europe.

"To us Germans, the trans-Atlantic partnership ... is one of the greatest achievements in our history. Without that achievement, the present Republic of Germany would not have become what it is today — a free and stable democracy — indeed, the most free and the most stable democracy to ever have existed on German soil," he said.

"America's true, firm friendship contributed considerably to German reunification just seven years ago — achieved in peace and freedom and with the agreement of all our neighbours and partners. For that we are and remain forever thankful to the American people," Mr. Kohl said.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright presented Mr. Kohl with the George Marshall Foundation Award at a dinner Thursday evening, honouring his years of dedication and distinguished public service.

Gen. Colin Powell hosted the dinner, attended by dignitaries including Mr. Ford, Britain's Prince Philip and former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.

The Chancellor's visit to Washington, lasting just over 24 hours, was seen as affirming the vital and close ties between the two eco-

nomics giants at a time when there has been disagreement on some issues.

Mr. Kohl and President Bill Clinton had a jovial dinner at an Italian restaurant in the historic district of Georgetown Wednesday evening, affirming their personal friendship and touching on international issues.

"These are two men who like each other very much," White House spokeswoman Anne Luzzatto said after the meeting, at which topics included recent French and British elections that returned centre-left governments to power.

Mr. Kohl's conservative Christian Democrat government faces elections next year and is embroiled in a dispute after first proposing, then dropping, plans to revalue gold reserves as part of efforts to qualify for the European single currency.

Washington and Bonn have differed publicly over Iran, with Mr. Clinton trying to unite his allies in a tough isolationist line in response to Iran's backing for "state terrorism" while Mr. Kohl and other Europeans favour more engagement with Tehran.

There has also been concern in Washington over the official restrictions in Germany of adherents of the U.S.-based church of Scientology.

Attempt on president's life threatens Albanian elections

TIRANA (AFP) — Hopes of holding Albanian elections as planned on June 29 dimmed further after an unsuccessful attempt to kill President Sali Berisha.

The assassination attempt Wednesday came two days after two bombs injured 28 people in a cafe and a bus in Tirana.

Political leaders, swiftly condemned the attack on Mr. Berisha but a Western diplomat commented, "the campaign has got off to the worst possible start."

Mr. Berisha's office said the president's bodyguard had disarmed a man identified as Ilir Ceta, 25, as he was about to throw a grenade during a campaign meeting at Rushbull, 40 kilometres northwest of Tirana.

Albanian Television described Mr. Ceta as an "extremist," and Interior Minister Behl Ceta said an inquiry had been launched to shed light on the incident.

Mr. Berisha appeared on television later Wednesday, visibly shocked, to appeal to Albanians to "keep cool and participate in a worthy electoral campaign."

He condemned the "terrorist act" which had occurred, saying, "terrorism is an amoral weapon."

Mr. Berisha's Democratic Party also issued a condemnation of the attack, and of "all forms of violence aimed at perturbing the normal progression of the electoral campaign and the holding of free elections on June 29."

Prime Minister Bashkim Fino of the opposition Socialist Party also condemned the attack, which he said increased tension in the run-up to the poll.

"It could have serious consequences," Mr. Fino told AFP, adding that he had ordered "very strict security measures" to protect all the candidates in the elections.

Social Democrat leader Skender Gjinushi said the incident arose from the continual rise in political tension since March in Albania.

Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini said Wednesday that between 600 and 800 international observers would monitor the elections.

Mr. Dini said the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) would send 600 observers, with the rest coming from various countries, including 100 from the United States and 45 from Britain.

"This sizeable international effort presupposes full cooperation from all Albanian political forces,



The body of the Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin lies in the mausoleum on Red Square in Moscow. Russian President Boris Yeltsin, while on his trip in St. Petersburg, suggested that a referendum be held on whether to remove Lenin's body from the mausoleum and give the corpse a Christian burial (Reuter photo)

Yeltsin warns regions chiefs, visits St. Petersburg

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin warned Russia's regional leaders Friday they were not immune in his anti-corruption drive and urged them to pursue "modern and competent" economic policies.

"I know there are a lot of bosses who got big powers and immediately opened up their own, big pockets," Mr. Yeltsin said in a regular radio address.

"They think they are far away from Moscow and there will be no control over them. They are wrong. We will start with checking their income and assets declarations and slap their hands to teach them a lesson."

Mr. Yeltsin, 66, resumed active work earlier this year following an eight-month absence due to heart surgery and pneumonia, working on reinvigorating economic reforms and renovating his government and foreign policy.

He says organised crime and corruption threaten the very existence of the Russian state and has also launched a high-profile anti-graft campaign.

He has published his own income declaration and told all other senior officials to do the same.

The Kremlin leader said Friday the time has come to pay more attention to regional problems.

"The economic policy of the regions should be modern and competent, like in Moscow, Nizhny Novgorod and Novosibirsk," Mr. Yeltsin said in a reference to the most advanced Russian regions where reforms have started to bear fruit.

As his pre-recorded radio address was broadcast, Mr. Yeltsin flew to Russia's second city St. Petersburg for a one-day foray into high culture.

Kremlin spokesman Sergei Yastzhebnsky said Mr. Yeltsin would sign a string of decrees in St. Petersburg, home to some of Russia's greatest cultural treasures.

Some of them "will sound slightly unusual to Russian ears," Interfax News Agency quoted Mr. Yastzhebnsky as saying, citing a possible decree "on St. Petersburg as Russia's cultural capital."

Mr. Yeltsin is taking reform guru and First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoly Chubais, who launched his political career in St. Petersburg, and Economy Minister Yakov Urinsov with him, hoping to jolt the former tsarist capital out of its provincial stagnation.

Consigned to second-rate status by the Bolsheviks, the

city has failed since communism fell to live up to the vision of its 18th century founder Peter the great as a "window on the West."

Now it is seeking to turn things around with a debut Euro-bond to raise \$300 million on international capital markets. While his ministers seek ways to improve the city's image among investors, Mr. Yeltsin's first stop will be at a statue of Alexander Pushkin, where he will lay a wreath to Russia's most celebrated poet.

Mr. Yeltsin, a building engineer by training and not known for promoting the arts, will also chair a meeting of his council on culture and art at the Russian Museum.

The museum, home to the biggest collection of Russian painting and, like all the arts, suffering from the cash squeeze which has accompanied Mr. Yeltsin's reforms, may get a cash pledge from the president in the tradition of his reelection drive.

Mr. Yeltsin called Friday for a referendum on whether the body of Lenin, now embalmed in a Red Square mausoleum, should be buried, Interfax reported.

Mr. Yeltsin, on a one-day visit to St. Petersburg, said the referendum on burying the founder of the Soviet Union could take place in the autumn.

Lenin's beset body was the centre of an official Soviet cult and remains revered by Russia's powerful Communists. Mr. Yeltsin, quoted by ITAR-TASS, said that "Lenin should be buried in the ground."

"Let the people decide — bury him in the Christian way or leave him as he is," he said. "On one hand we know he brought a lot of ill to Russia, on the other, this is our history and we cannot hide from it."

Under Russian law, at least two million signatures have to be collected to hold a national referendum, and no more than 10 per cent of them can be from the same region of the federation.

In February Mr. Yeltsin told Russian journalists that Lenin ought to be buried "near his mother in Saint Petersburg as he wished."

He also said that the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church believed that Lenin's mummification ran counter to Christian tradition.

Mr. Yeltsin's remarks provoked a storm of protest from Communist deputies in the State Duma.

100 Afghans march in support of Taliban army

CHARIKAR, Afghanistan (AP) — About 100 demonstrators waving the white flag of the Taliban religious army marched down the deserted main street of Chari-

kar Friday, chanting slogans in support of the Taliban.

At the front line, about six kilometres north of Chari- kar, turbaned Taliban soldiers relaxed in the midday sun, waiting for orders to launch an all out assault against their enemies in Jebul Siraj, another 20 kilometres away.

On Thursday the fighting had been heavy when Taliban soldiers and their opponents opened fire with heavy artillery and rocket fire.

But by Friday the fighting had subsided.

The shops in Chari- kar, roughly 60 kilometres north of the beleaguered Afghan capital of Kabul, were shuttered as demonstrators marched past, waving the white flag of the Taliban army.

The Taliban had evacuated the city earlier, fearing residents, most of whom are ethnic Tajiks, may be loyal to ousted military chief Ahmad Shah Massoud, also an ethnic Tajik.

The demonstrators appar-

ently were brought to Chari- kar from neighbouring villages.

Mr. Massoud's soldiers took control of Jebul Siraj from the Taliban last week as the religious militia was still reeling from a devastating defeat in the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif.

There the Taliban was decimated by their former Uzbek allies. At least 300 Taliban soldiers were killed, several thousand taken prisoner including Afghanistan's Taliban Foreign Minister Mullah Mohammad Ghous.

In neighbouring Pakistan Thursday, the Pakistan Foreign Ministry announced a three-point peace plan for Afghanistan. A plan, the Foreign Ministry in Pakistan said the Taliban had agreed to last Saturday.

However, a Taliban spokesman in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar said the religious army won't negotiate with its enemies until its high-ranking comrades have been released.

The anti-Taliban alliance, which controls the northern one-third of the country, said it won't enter into negotiations with pre-conditions, including prisoner re-

lease. The Taliban swept into Kabul last September imposing a rigid form of Islamic government that bans women from the work force, girls from school, forces men to grow beards, go to the mosque, bans music, videos and most games.

Most Taliban soldiers belong to Afghanistan's majority Pashtun ethnic group and are Sunni Muslims, like most Pakistanis. By comparison, the people of northern Afghanistan belong to the minority ethnic and religious groups, such as Uzbeks, Tajiks, Tajiks, Shiites and Ismaili Muslims.

Briefly last week the Taliban army controlled northern Afghanistan, but they were thrown out after they tried to disarm the local population and impose their strict brand of Islam.

The people of northern Afghanistan adhere to more moderate traditions than their brethren in southern Afghanistan, where conservative tribal traditions exist. Meanwhile, an Iranian delegation headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Aledin Burujerdi arrived in the northern Afghan capital of Mazar-i-Sharif Friday to

meet anti-Taliban forces, the Iranian news agency (IRNA) said.

It said Burujerdi travelled to Mazar-i-Sharif "at the invitation" of the alliance of forces opposed to the Taliban Islamic militia.

The deputy foreign minister earlier held talks with ousted President Burhanuddin Rabbani whom Iran still recognises as the leader of Afghanistan. IRNA said without specifying when and where the meeting took place.

Mr. Burujerdi said at Mazar Airport that "recent developments ... prove once and for all that the crisis in this country has no military solution."

"Iran has always been a messenger of peace in Afghanistan and this policy will continue," he added, quoted by IRNA.

He said political power in Afghanistan should contain "all ethnic groups" from the country. The visit comes amid an increase in tension between Iran and the Sunni Muslim fundamentalist Taliban, which closed the Iranian embassy in Kabul Monday, accusing Tehran of interfering in Afghanistan's internal affairs.

4 Russian reporters freed in Chechnya after 3 months

MOSCOW (R) — Four Russian journalists were freed Friday after more than three months of captivity in separatist Chechnya and President Boris Yeltsin praised Chechen leader Aslan Maskhadov for his role in their release.

Three others, a television crew from the NTV commercial station, are still being held in the breakaway region.

"Maskhadov and many federal officials have worked persistently for this. They found them and freed them, they did not abandon them," Mr. Yeltsin told reporters at the start of a visit to St. Petersburg.

"If anything happens, we never back down," he said. "Fighting terrorism is one of the main presidential programmes."

Chechnya's towns and cities were ruined in 21 months of fighting between separatists and Russian troops trying to quell an independence drive.

Nearly every man has a weapon and jobs are scarce. Fighting ended last August after tens of thousands of people were killed and

peace was sealed in a deal signed in Moscow last month by Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Maskhadov.

The freeing of hostages, especially Russian journalists, has become a burning issue for Mr. Maskhadov who, surrounded by powerful field commanders, has to prove his grip on power.

Interfax New Agency quoted Russia's Security Council secretary, Ivan Rybkin, as praising Maskhadov's efforts.

Avoiding war in Bosnia not enough — Albright

WASHINGTON (R) — Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has called for an all-out effort to bring permanent peace to Bosnia, saying it was not enough merely to avoid another war there.

In a Harvard University commencement address released by the State Department in Washington, Mrs. Albright also urged the world to accept its moral responsibilities by backing the Bosnia War Crimes Tribunal, but she announced no new measures for making Bosnia's ethnic factions comply.

Mrs. Albright said that in recent days President Bill Clinton had approved steps "to make the (Bosnian) peace process irreversible and give each party a clear stake in its success" but she gave no details of these steps.

Her speech in Cambridge, Massachusetts, marked the 50th anniversary of a Har-

vard commencement address in which then Secretary of State George Marshall announced his plan for the economic reconstruction of Europe after the World War II.

She noted that in defending the Marshall Plan at the time, Sen. Arthur Vandenberg observed "that it does little good to extend a 15-foot rope to a man drowning 20 feet away."

"Similarly, we cannot achieve our objectives in Bosnia by doing just enough to avoid immediate war we must do all we can to help the people of Bosnia to achieve permanent peace," Mrs. Albright said.

Her remarks hinted at but did not address directly an apparent difference of opinion with Defence Secretary William Cohen over whether U.S. troops in Bosnia should pull out on schedule in mid-1998 or leave options open for now. Mr. Cohen favoured a firm withdrawal date.

Reinforcing a message she delivered during a tour of former Yugoslavia last weekend, Mrs. Albright warned that the Balkan parties would get no Western aid unless they cooperated with the Hague-based war crimes tribunal.

The tribunal, seen by Washington as a key to implementing the U.S.-brokered Dayton Peace Accord that ended the 43-month Bosnian war in November 1995, has indicted 75 suspects from Bosnia, but so far only nine have been arrested.

Mrs. Albright said the tribunal confronted not only Bosnia but the world with a choice. "We can accept atrocities as inevitable, or we can strive for a higher standard."

"We can presume to forget what only God and the victims have standing to forgive, or we can heed the most searing lesson of this

century, which is that evil — when unopposed — will spawn more evil," she said. "We all have a stake in establishing a precedent that will deter future atrocities, in helping the tribunal make a lasting peace easier by separating the innocent from the guilty, in holding accountable the perpetrators of ethnic cleansing and in seeing that those who consider rape just another tactic of war answer for their crimes."

Western countries last week threatened to deny economic aid to Bosnian Serb towns that "tolerate" indicted war criminals working in the government. Washington has also looked at whether a special military or police unit might try to track down war criminals but no conclusion has been announced amid fears such action could cause U.S. casualties and undermine the Dayton process.

Tanzanian troops reportedly played key role in former Zaire

DAR ES SALAAM (AFP) — Tanzanian troops played a key role in helping the rebels of Laurent Kabila win their seven-month civil war in neighbouring Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the privately owned weekly Express reports in its latest issue.

It said they provided military training and logistics and communications support, and that Tanzanian bomb disposal experts scoured Kinshasa after Mr. Kabila's troops entered the capital in mid-May.

Tanzanian officials here refused to confirm the army's involvement, even though an AFP reporter noted that Mr. Kabila's bodyguards had been recognised on television as well-known members of the Tanzanian presidential security unit.

"We can't say anything. We are just observing the new developments, which we wholeheartedly welcome," said a senior official in the office of President Benjamin Mkapa.

The report in the Express follows widespread reports of active aid to Mr. Kabila's rebels by troops from Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and Angola. Those countries all denied the charges, despite many sightings of their soldiers, and Zambian soldiers were seen transporting Mr. Kabila's men through their territory to attack Lubumbashi, near the border.

When Mr. Kabila first emerged as leader of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire, newspapers here reported that he had been living in Dar Es Salaam for the previous 10 years.

Mr. Kabila studied in East Germany in the late 1950s, returning just before his country became independent from Belgium in 1960, but little is known of his movements since then.

He spent at least some time as a guerrilla in eastern Zaire, fighting even in the 1960s to overthrow President Mobutu Sese Seko, but sources say he spent a great deal of time in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya.

The newspapers here traced Mr. Kabila to the Dar Es Salaam suburbs of Masani and Mbezi. They said he had a house and family members in each suburb, and masqueraded as Mzee Mtswale (Mzee is a term of respect in Swahili, literally meaning "old man") of the southwestern Tanzanian Fipa tribe.

They say he was posing as a quiet and secretive businessman, and that members of his family remain in Dar Es

Salaam.

The Express, quoting unidentified military sources, said Tanzanian troops were involved right from the start of the civil war, when Tutsis in eastern Zaire rebelled against moves to deport them to Rwanda, their ancestral homeland.

It said the training was expected to continue, both within the DRC and at the military academy here.

Mr. Mkapa was quick to recognise Mr. Kabila as president of the renamed Democratic Republic of Congo. He pledged his personal support for him, but was making a state visit to Kenya when Mr. Kabila was sworn in, and did not attend the ceremony in Kinshasa. The only presidents who did, significantly, were those of Uganda, Angola, Rwanda, Burundi and Zambia.

Meanwhile, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson left Thursday for Kinshasa at the head of a large American delegation to the former Zaire, the State Department said.

Mr. Richardson was due to meet Mr. Kabila in Lubumbashi Saturday, as well as with officials of the High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Committee of the Red Cross, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns.

Mr. Richardson was to tell Mr. Kabila that Washington wants a "broad-based" government in Kinshasa and the organisation of democratic elections, Mr. Burns said.

Washington also wants "a government that will be devoted to a liberal economy, a free economy and an economy that will be open to Western investment including, we hope, American investment," the spokesman said.

The United States would also like to see Mr. Kabila aid U.N. investigators probing the massacre of refugees in eastern Zaire, and punish those found responsible.

We would like to see the new government of the Congo open to a cooperative relationship with the international humanitarian organisations," Mr. Burns added.

Washington will hold off on offering aid to Kinshasa until it evaluates the new government's performance, Mr. Burns said, adding that no "ironclad promises" had been made.

Mr. Richardson could also visit other countries in the region, he added, without saying which ones.

Other members of the delegation include the head of the Agency for International Development, and representatives of the treasury and the Pentagon, as well as members of Congress.

Indonesia strikes out at U.S. Congress critics

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia hit out at U.S. Congressional critics Friday, dropping its participation in an American military training programme and scrapping plans to buy nine U.S.-made F-16 warplanes.

Foreign Minister Ali Alatas told a news conference he hoped the move would ease friction with the United States to allow cooperation on "the many economic, political and security issues that have to be faced in the years to come."

"The government of Indonesia has decided to forego its participation in the Expanded International Military Education and Training (E-IMET) programme of-

ferred by the United States government as well as its planned purchase of nine F-16 planes from the United States government," Mr. Alatas said in a statement.

He said President Suharto had conveyed the decision to President Bill Clinton in a

letter dated May 26 but only delivered on June 2 for technical reasons.

Mr. Alatas denied there was a link between the move and criticism from the U.S. State Department over the conduct of Indonesia's May 29 general elections, which the ruling Golkar Party won with a sweeping majority.

Jakarta has come under fire from some U.S. Senators and Congressmen, particularly over its human rights record and East Timor, the former Portuguese colony that Indonesia occupied in 1975 and annexed the following year.

"This has been brewing for a while. It is more the congressional criticism of Indonesia in general over East Timor, human rights and democracy issues," a senior Asian diplomat said.

In his letter, Mr. Suharto cited "wholly unjustified criticisms in the United States Congress against Indonesia which are linked to

its participation in the (E-IMET) programme and the planned purchase of the F-16 planes" as a factor.

The U.S. embassy said in a statement: "While we regret this decision, it is of course up to Indonesia to determine its own defence requirements."

The United States and Indonesia have cooperated closely on a broad range of regional and global issues in the past, and we look forward to working closely with Indonesia in these areas in the future."

Over a period of years the United States has been the major arms supplier to Indonesia, military sources said.

A diplomatic source said the E-IMET courses "are generally considered professional military courses for senior military members as opposed to technical courses."

The United States barred Indonesia from participating in the programme in 1992

after security forces fired into demonstrating mourners in the East Timor capital of Dili in 1991. Witnesses said up to 200 people died.

In late 1995, Washington reinstated Indonesia's participation in the programme, which covers about 20 senior officers annually at a cost of \$600,000.

The United States had initiated the sale of the F-16s to Indonesia after their original sale to Pakistan was blocked by Congress over Islamabad's nuclear policy, but Congress has also held up their release to Jakarta.

Diplomatic sources said the decision over the F-16s could adversely affect other U.S. military sales to Indonesia.

Anti-Indonesian activists in Britain have assailed the sale of hawk jets by British aerospace PLC to Jakarta, which currently has over 20 hawks and 10 F-16s bought earlier.

Sharif urges defence budget cuts for India, Pakistan

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has called for mutual cuts in the defence budgets of India and Pakistan, a private television network reported Friday.

In an interview with India-based Al TV network the Pakistani leader said the South Asian arch-rivals should also withdraw troops from the divided territory of Kashmir through a bilateral arrangement.

"I have requested the Indian prime minister that troops should be withdrawn from Kashmir as a first gesture which will help in building an atmosphere of trust," Mr. Sharif said in an interview to be broadcast

Sunday.

When Mr. Sharif met Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral in the Maldives last month during a private television network reported Friday.

In an interview with India-based Al TV network the Pakistani leader said the South Asian arch-rivals should also withdraw troops from the divided territory of Kashmir through a bilateral arrangement.

"I have requested the Indian prime minister that troops should be withdrawn from Kashmir as a first gesture which will help in building an atmosphere of trust," Mr. Sharif said in an interview to be broadcast

Sunday.

said, adding both sides should end hostilities.

"This is not the time to fight. We must learn from our past mistakes and should analyse what all we have gained or lost."

"We fought wars and spent so much on defence budgets instead of concentrating on the development of both the nations."

"We have only suffered by adopting a path of confrontation...It is high time we should change our attitude."

India, which holds the southern two-thirds of Kashmir and Pakistan which has the northern tip, have fought two of their three wars over the Hima-

layan territory since the subcontinent's independence in 1947.

"We must get over the hangovers of past animosities," Mr. Sharif said.

"If something goes wrong in India, they blame Pakistan and if any bomb blast occurs here, we blame India. This has been our approach for the last 50 years."

"I want to come out of this frame of mind for a new beginning," he said.

New Delhi accuses Pakistan of arming and training Muslim guerrillas spearheading a bloody separatist campaign in the Indian zone of Kashmir.

Night curfew imposed on Brazzaville after clashes

BRAZZAVILLE (R) — Authorities in the former French colony of Congo Brazzaville put the capital under a nighttime curfew after government troops clashed with supporters of former military leader Denis Sassou Nguesso.

A communiqué broadcast on state television said the curfew would be in force from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. (1800 GMT to 0500 GMT). Gunfire continued in Brazzaville's business district into the evening.

Witnesses said shooting

broke out before dawn between soldiers and Mr. Sassou Nguesso's guards after troops in armoured vehicles deployed around his house in the north of the capital.

Gunbattles spread through Mr. Sassou Nguesso's stronghold in the northern suburbs and the army sent reinforcements. Four people were wounded, including one of Mr. Sassou Nguesso's guards.

Mr. Sassou Nguesso, interviewed by Radio France International, accused President Pascal Lissouba of

surrounding his home with armoured vehicles and seeking an excuse to postpone presidential elections due on July 27.

"I believe that, on the whole, the authorities want to create incidents to prevent the presidential elections from taking place," he said.

Witnesses said at least six armoured cars had been deployed at about 4 a.m. in Brazzaville's northeastern Mpila district.

Armoured vehicles were on the streets in various

parts of the capital later and soldiers wandered round firing in the air. The U.S. embassy advised its nationals to stay at home.

France has economic interests in the central African nation and 350 troops there — left over from an operation to evacuate foreigners from Kinshasa in the last days of the civil war in former Zaire, now renamed the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Brazzaville is just across the river from Kinshasa, capital of the former Zaire.

Russian Duma votes overwhelmingly for Belarus deal

MOSCOW (R) — The Russian parliament's lower house voted almost unanimously Friday to ratify a union treaty with the neighbouring state of Belarus.

A total of 363 deputies in the State Duma voted for the treaty, formalising a loose union between the two Slav states. Only two voted against.

The treaty was signed last month by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and headline Belarus leader Alexander Lukashenko.

The presented documents assume the most rational form of integration,

allowing our two peoples to move towards each other," Deputy Prime Minister Valery Serov told deputies.

He said the treaty was the fruit of compromise between many political forces in the two former Soviet republics.

The document now has to be approved by the upper chambers of both parliaments.

Belarus opposition activists refuse to recognise the new parliament and are

fiercely opposed to the integration deal, which they say is a sell-out of Belarussian interests.

But most Russians and belarussians, nostalgic for the Soviet Union which collapsed in 1991, support integration moves between their two states.

Mr. Serov said the treaty had potential to be expanded, so the two countries could hold a referendum after two or four years on a closer merger.

shenku too much power and damage Russia's interests.

The lower house of the Belarus parliament, created after a controversial referendum last November, unanimously backed the integration deal with Russia late last month.

The document now has to be approved by the upper chambers of both parliaments.

Belarus opposition activists refuse to recognise the new parliament and are

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By Dr. Musa Keilani

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975
جريدة الجordanية مستقلة سياسية عربية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسات الرسمية
الاسم: الجordanية

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Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,

University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 684311, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

City as divided as ever

AS ISRAEL celebrated the capture of east Jerusalem 30 years ago, it continued to boast that the Holy City is its united capital forever. By refusing to recognise the rights of the Palestinians in the city in defiance of U.N. General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, Israel is set to make the question of Jerusalem the issue which would make or break the peace process. The extent of the Israeli defiance of logic and historical lessons, over and above its repudiation of international legitimacy, is reflected in the Jewish state's persistence in believing that Jerusalem will remain its capital for all times, unmindful of the long and tortuous history of the city and how powers and civilisations gained and lost control of it over the past 3,000 years.

Yet the biggest obstacle in the face of Israeli designs about the future of the Holy City is the unshakable and indisputable reality that, despite all sorts of manipulations, it remains divided between Jews and Arabs at all levels. Not 30 or even a 100 years of occupation would be sufficient to unite the two sides. The Arab population of east Jerusalem continues to live in a separate world from the Jewish population on the other side of the divide despite all Israeli efforts to close down Palestinian institutions and increase the Israeli presence in the eastern part. Israel has gone to the extent of imposing draconian measures against Palestinian residents in a bid to take away from them their residency permits and tilt the balance in favour of the Jewish population.

Whereas the Palestinians are squeezed in only 23 per cent of the eastern part of the city, they constitute about half of the total population. Only 10,000 new Palestinian houses were built during the 30 years of Israeli occupation. The Jewish side, on the other hand, was allowed to build ten times as much in and around Jerusalem. Meanwhile, the disparities between the two Jerusesalems continue to increase in all spheres and services even though the purposely weakened Arab side bears 26 per cent of the total municipality budget.

Israel would be better advised to take account of the reality on the ground and accept the fact that there are in fact two Jerusesalems, culturally, religiously, socially, economically and politically. Unless Israel is determined to drive out the Palestinian population from east Jerusalem, by force, no amount of make-believe would change the reality of the divide between Jews and Arabs in the Holy City, now or ever.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Dustour has urged Kuwait to end its enmity towards Iraq and take measures to reconcile with its northern neighbour in light of the Israeli-Turkish threats to the whole Arab Nation. Jihad Momani said that Israel has not concealed its ambitions to maintain its occupation of Arab lands and expand at the expense of the Arab World, and it has joined forces with Turkey to help achieve that objective. Israel's ambitions do not stop at Iraq, which is now invaded by Turkey's forces with backing from the Jewish state and blessing from the United States, and Kuwait has to realise that Israel has bigger ambitions in the Gulf region, continued the writer. He said that Israel is in alliance with Turkey to strike at the Arab heartland and it is trying to weaken Egypt and Sudan, through its alliance with Eritrea, to strike at the southern flank of the Arab Nation. Kuwait has a real interest in foregoing its dispute with Iraq for the moment and to follow in the footsteps of Syria in making peace with Iraq in the face of the common danger, the writer said. He said the time has come for the Arab countries to act practically, unite their forces and fend off the looming danger.

Fahed Fanek, a writer for Al Ra'i, tackled the question of improving the living conditions of Palestinian refugees living in 13 camps in Jordan. The government has allocated JD 400 million for the planned social security net, a large sum of which will be spent on Palestine refugee camps, he noted. Part of this amount will be coming from the World Bank, in the form of loans to Jordan, and part as contribution from donor nations, he added. The writer said that while supporting the government's effort to improve the environment and the infrastructure of the camps and reduce the unemployment among its residents, we realise that such moves do not mean that the refugees lose their right to return to Palestine or obtain compensation for their lost property. He said it is illogical for the government to finance the improvement of the camps through more loans which will weigh heavily on the state's treasury and eventually on the Jordanian people. Jordan is a country that has been hosting refugees since 1948; the United Nations had rented the lands for the camps and it should be held responsible for the well-being of its residents. Therefore, the U.N. should not shift the burden on the Jordanian government. He said that while backing the government's humanitarian moves, it should be made clear that the Jordanian taxpayer must not bear the burden to achieve that purpose.

Jordanian Perspective

Israel must fulfill commitments if it wants regional integration

THE POSITION adopted by Qatar vis-à-vis the next Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic conference is commendable. On the one hand, Doha has kept the door open for Israel to participate in the meeting as a member of the regional order genuinely interested in co-existence and economic cooperation on the basis of respect for the rights of all. On the other, Qatar has made it clear to Israel that it has no place in the regional community if it does not honour its agreements with the Arabs, particularly the Palestinians.

That is what it really boils down to. Of course, there is a key element in the equation: how the United States and some other allies of Israel would react if Qatar deliberately did not invite Israel to the conference. Qatar would definitely come under pressure from these quarters to convene the conference with a business-as-usual approach, regardless of the major setbacks that we have seen in the peace process.

No doubt, the pressure has already started and could hit its peak soon, when the Emir of Qatar visits Washington. For Washington, the staunch force behind Israel, a MENA conference without Israel is meaningless. So it is a foregone conclusion that the U.S. will try, with everything in its power, to ensure that the conference is held in time and with Israeli participation, regardless of the Jewish state's arrogance and intransigence.

Let us not forget that the focal point of the MENA conferences (as far as the U.S. and some European countries were concerned) when they were launched in the euphoria of the breakthroughs on the Palestinian-Israeli track of the peace process, was the integration of Israel into the Middle East.

Obviously, the Cairo meeting dramatically changed that and reintroduced the old/new concept that Israel should not necessarily be given the role of centre of gravity in the Middle East. The Cairo conference showed that the Arabs and the international community could sit down and do serious business on their own, as could the Arabs among themselves. And that if Israel wanted to attend, it was welcome, but not at any cost and under any circumstances; it had to meet the legitimate requirements of peace in the region.

Israel was indeed present in Cairo, but could not gain much from it. Those who wanted to do business with Israel did not need to go to Cairo. They had their own channels and means to do so. But the Israeli delegation, including five important ministers and nearly 100 businessmen, did take back a strong message from Cairo — doing business with the Arab World does require accepting the reality that Israel should recognise and honour Arab rights. That message has translated into pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to change his ways. Unfortunately, that pressure did not produce tangible shift in Netanyahu's approach, but the resulting frustration among the Israeli business community was indeed partly reflected in the downwards plunge of the prime minister's popularity since then.

The Arabs also did not have to go to Cairo to do business among themselves. There have been too many inter-Arab meetings on trade, economic and industrial cooperation for the Arabs not to realise that the overall advancement of the Arab World could be accomplished through increased ties among themselves. But there was indeed a big difference — the Cairo meeting was the first time that Arab

countries, as a bloc as well as individual countries, met with other countries under the broad umbrella of economic cooperation in the Middle East, amid signs of eventual peace in the region and despite the snags facing Arab-Israeli peace making.

A MENA conference in Qatar, as scheduled in November with or without Israel, would serve the Arab purpose. Israel will be there only if it actually meets the demands of peace; if indeed it does that, then its presence there is most welcome.

And if Israel is not there, then perhaps the Jewish state will learn the lesson and mend its ways. In the meantime, the Arabs will go ahead with their own approach to regional economic cooperation.

Now warnings from some countries that they would not attend the conference at all, raise one question: Should the hopes of the people of the region for economic prosperity be held hostage to the headline policies of the Israeli government?

We cannot deny that the three MENA conferences held thus far, starting with Casablanca in 1994, Amman in 1995 and Cairo in 1996, did produce results although not to the level everyone expected. The Doha conference this year will be another step forward and it will definitely add to the overall concept of regional economic cooperation, with the private sector assuming the leading role.

And this reasoning is behind the Jordanian decision to attend the Doha meeting. We should not allow Israel to dictate our lives. We should go ahead with our plans and the mapping of our future, making it clear to Israel that if it wants to be part of that future, it has not only to undertake but also fulfill certain commitments.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Arabs should strive to end all occupation of their land, be it by Israel or by Turkey

REVIEWED BY
ELIA NASRALLAH

THE CONTINUED Turkish invasion of northern Iraq, the peace process and domestic affairs continued to be the focus of interest of columnists and editorial writers for the local press last week.

A writer for Al Ra'i said that the Arabs are not concerned with the internal strife between the military and political parties in Turkey and should not take sides regarding that conflict; they are only concerned with the Turkish aggression on Iraq.

The Arabs are against occupation — be it Israel's occupation of Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese territories, Iraq's occupation of Kuwait or Turkey's occupation of Iraqi territory; and they should strive to end such situations by all available means, said Sultan Hanab.

The writer said that Arab diplomatic statements can by no means end Turkey's incursion inside Iraqi territory; what is rather needed is a concerted, pan-Arab effort to evict the Turks from the Iraqi lands.

He said the Turkish occupation, which has been condemned by most nations, is a flagrant violation of international laws.

Yasser Zaareh, a writer for Al Dustour, focused attention on Damascus, saying that the Syrian leadership has been active in the current political offensive against Israeli and Turkish acts of aggression on neighbouring countries.

As the Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu has shown no indication that he is willing to withdraw from the occupied Syrian territory, Damascus is exerting efforts to isolate Israel by exposing its aggression and continued occupation of Arab lands.

As for Turkey's aggression on northern Iraq, Damascus has taken steps to mend its fences with Baghdad and has won the Arab Gulf countries' support for condemning the Turkish invasion and demanding that Turkey leave northern Iraq, noted the writer.

He said that as a practical step to end differences with Baghdad, Damascus has exchanged officials trade visits with the Iraqi capital, opened its common borders with Iraq and has been active in preparing for an Iraqi-Syrian-Iranian alliance to deal with Turkey's aggression.

Jamal Tahat, a writer for Al Ra'i, described the current Syrian moves to mend fences with Iraq as an action motivated by the common Iraqi-Syrian interests and not connected with ideology and political views that have separated the eastern and western wings of the Baath Arab Party for so long.

Of course the Syrian leadership did not, all of a sudden, discover that Iraq is in danger and that foreign countries, including Turkey, are committing aggression on that country.

The fact that the aggression on Iraq came from Turkey, which has ambitions on the Arab lands and is allied with Israel in a bid to weaken both Syria and Iraq, has motivated Damascus to take the recent moves towards Baghdad, the writer pointed out.

He said that irrespective of the motivation, Damascus' moves could open the way for Syria and Iraq to attempt to solve their ideological differences, given the new situation on the ground and the developments in the region, especially the emergence of the Israeli-Turkish alliance which is against pan-Arab interests.

Reflecting on the situation in the occupied Palestinian lands, a writer for Al Aswaq said that the Palestinian leadership has all the right to combat Israel's attempts to buy or occupy Arab lands in Palestine by any available means.

Israel, backed by the United States, is currently attacking the Palestinian leadership for passing laws against the sale of lands to the Israelis, at a time when the U.S.-backed Israel is maintaining its hold on occupied Arab lands, preventing the Arabs from buying land in the Israeli territories and helping the collaborators and agents who

continue their drive to sell the Palestinian nation to the enemy, said Rashid Hassan.

As for the Palestinians, they are overwhelmingly supporting their leadership in the drive to punish the agents and traitors who sell the lands to Israel because they "consider this sale as a crime against nation, he said.

The writer said that during the Israeli occupation of lands, which began in 1948, the Israeli leaders have succeeded in recruiting 40,000 agents to help them acquire lands in Palestine and have used force to occupy areas which they could not buy from the Arabs.

The writer said that the Palestinians are called upon to expose and punish the traitors who have no sense of belonging to their nation.

A writer for Al Ra'i reflected on the 30-year span of occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israeli forces, since the 1967 war, saying it is to be regretted that after all these years the Arabs remain in disarray and unable to regain their lands.

Sultan Hattab said that the Israeli aggression is still in place, despite all the accords and peace deals, and to make it worse, the Arabs are divided, weak and unable to unify their ranks to confront the common danger.

Thirty years of occupation have not been enough for the Arabs to wake up to the danger of Israel's ambitious designs and it is sad to see the Arab states maintain stronger ties with foreign countries, some of which are openly hostile to the Arab Nation, than with the other Arab states, the writer said.

He added that it is indeed sad to see the Arab Nation cry over lost lands and involved in pan-Arab conflicts at a time when the Israelis are gloating over their victories and consolidating their hold on occupied Arab territories.

Subhi Fahmawi, a writer for Al Ra'i, supported the government's decision to float the prices of vegetables and fruits, saying that the prices should be determined by the market forces of demand and

supply.

The writer said that abroad people buy only their needs of fruits and vegetables and control their consumption, but in Jordan people often show their greed and tend to buy a lot more produce than they actually need.

The writer said that since greed is the motive for purchase, the greedy consumer should be made to pay higher prices. Furthermore, he said, residents of western Amman who have been complaining about the high prices of vegetables and fruits in their district should try to buy their needs from the open-air markets established by the municipality in eastern Amman and boycott the green-grocers of western Amman districts, eventually forcing them to bring down their prices.

The writer said that perhaps the floating of the prices will make people realise the need to restrict excessive consumption and so help achieve a balance between consumption and production.

Jihad Momani, a writer for Al Dustour, said that Al Amal Cancer Centre is facing the problem of covering its operational costs as it provides free treatment to the needy people and cancer patients are increasing in number.

He said that Al Amal Cancer Centre is a very huge institution which Jordan, with its meagre resources, can by no means sustain; at the same time, it is not possible to impose heavy charges on the local people for cancer treatment and Jordan cannot borrow from other nations to run this institution and increase its debt burdens.

The writer said perhaps the solution lies with a national health insurance system which would stipulate that Jordanians pay part of the treatment at the country's hospitals, including the cancer centre.

He said that the government is called upon to speed up the implementation of such a project that has been shelved for so long and solve this complex problem.

LETTERS

Mistakes should be paid for

To the Editor:

SEEING GRIEF and pain in my friend's eyes, I cannot but wonder if what happened could have been prevented. Compiled mistakes resulted in the death of my friend's father, Dr. T. Karadsheh, who had, on many counts, led a healthy lifestyle for he was a doctor and perfectly aware of the good and the bad; but somehow things turned ugly.

Fingers could be pointed at the wrongdoers and many questions could be asked, yet the guilty might get away with it and the questions might remain unanswered. We often hear stories of medical malpractices that were never dealt with and left families deeply hurt.

It is quite alarming to start believing that the medical profession has turned commercial and is open to rivalry and negative competition. No one wishes to deny our doctors a good life; nonetheless, a doctor's mission in life is so important that he/she should rise above all in being first and foremost the ultimate humanitarian.

At this point in time, generalising would be a mistake; it is just a case of some rotten apples, but these shall eventually ruin the whole basket if not removed. I still have hope that justice will prevail and those who make damaging or deadly mistakes will be held accountable.

Lina H. Kasim,
Amman.Unanimous
condemnation essential

To the Editor:

I BELIEVE it is high time to put an end to cold blooded, brutal murders of children such as Nidal, Haneen and Hani. Children are the future of our nation, our joy and pure human beings. They do not deserve the cruel consequences of the insanity of their parents. If their murderers do not get the justice they deserve, I am afraid it will be a temptation for more murder cases of the helpless, as is the case with women that are accused of bringing shame upon their families.

The fact that a man got a three-month jail sentence for murdering his allegedly adulterous sister is one example. It is completely primitive to allow someone to take a life for "adultery"; this can only initiate a never ending series of murders whereby any man can commit such acts and claim he is protecting the honour of his family.

I strongly believe that the lenient laws are giving these murderers the green light to proceed with "cleansing our society of adulterous women", as another reader wrote.

I call upon the authorities to firmly discipline the murderers of children and helpless women, to set an example of them. And I believe that if every citizen voices his or her concern about how our society is endangered by criminals that get back in the street three months after murdering their siblings, one day their voices will be heard.

Lubna Dairanieh,
Amman 11118.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.

Critics dispute book's claim that Bible code predicts events

By Richard Pyle
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — A book that claims the Old Testament contains coded clues to future events — including the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln, Mohandas K. Gandhi, John F. Kennedy and Yitzhak Rabin — is creating an uproar in theological circles.

At least for the moment, sceptics appeared to hold the high ground against "The Bible Code," which has arrived in bookstores recently with a \$25 price tag. But heavy promotion by publisher Simon and Schuster was helping to turn it into a media event, with author Michael Drosnin popping up on television talk shows, and Warner Bros. reportedly acquiring movie rights.

The book claims that the original Hebrew text of the first five books of the Bible is encoded with letter patterns that, when subjected to computer analysis, reveal biographical data about several rabbis who lived hundreds of years later, and foretell events including 19th and 20th century assassinations.

The code supposedly can be read by finding letters scattered throughout the text with equal numbers of letters between them — something that several scholars and Drosnin agreed could not be done without a computer.

Experts say the theory of coded predictions in the Bible has bounced around theological circles for several years, and is used by some Christian and Jewish fundamentalist groups for fund-raising and proselytising.

It got a major jolt of credibility from a 1994 article in the scholarly journal *Statistical Science*, in which two Israeli experts said they could prove that Genesis contained coded names and birthdates of several dozen rabbis born centuries later.

Those authorities did not say other events were encoded in the Bible, and some critics say Drosnin is misusing the magazine article to bolster his theory about such predictions.

"I don't care what people claim — the fact is that I found these predictions, including Rabin's assassination, encoded in the Bible and it's clear as a bell," Drosnin said. "A child could have seen it."

Drosnin, who calls himself "not religious," said he does not know if the codes are of divine origin. "Since there is a code, there must have been an encoder, but I just don't know who it was."

Drosnin said Rabin's 1995 murder was the only such

prediction to be decoded before it came true, and that he personally had tried unsuccessfully to warn the Israeli leader through a mutual friend.

Biblical predictions of the assassinations of Lincoln, Gandhi, and John and Robert Kennedy were decoded long after the fact, when computer analysis was available, he said.

"Even Isaac Newton, maybe the greatest genius of modern times, believed there were codes in the Bible. But Isaac Newton didn't have a computer," Drosnin said.

Bob Bender, a Simon and Schuster vice president and senior editor, told the New York Times his firm was publishing the book "because we think it reflects serious research." Bender did not return calls.

Some scholars and theologians were cool to Drosnin's thesis, saying computers could be used to find evidence for almost anything.

"One question is, what's the purpose of this? Another is, what happens if you apply the same procedure to other bodies of literature?" said Shaul Magid, a philosophy professor at New York's Jewish Theological Seminary.

"There's also the question of what happens if you apply the same computer code to a slightly different text of scripture. Just the change of one letter changes everything else, and the whole thing falls apart."

Mr. Magid said he found the idea of seeking evidence of future events in the Bible offensive because it "reduces scripture to technology... eliminating any insights or inspiration" from the words.

Alan Brill, a professor of Jewish mysticism and thought at Yeshiva University, said the material in Drosnin's book is similar to material widely circulated on the Internet.

Mr. Brill said it lacks any "theologically meaningful" basis, and answered "no" when asked if there was any reason to believe modern-day events are predicted in the Torah, or first five books of the Bible.

Nor are such purported predictions confined only to Judeo-Christian history, Mr. Brill said.

"There are Islamic versions based on the Koran, and even Hare Krishna versions. It's just like the popularity of Nostradamus as a best-seller, the same sort of phenomenon," he said. "It's a brand new way for many people to find many of these predictions are true."

King says no changes to amended press law

(Continued from page 1)

amendments to the law."

Following the introduction of the amendments to the Press and Publications Law last month, opposition figures, journalists and professional associations expressed their outrage saying that the amendments aim at gagging the press during the upcoming elections by imposing severe restrictions on coverage.

King Hussein referred to the professional associations as politicised institutions noting that many of them are affiliated to other countries. "There are some who are still holding allegiance to other countries at the political or ideological and other levels," King Hussein said.

The King's visit to Karak coincided with the 30th anniversary of the 1967 war. The King described the war by saying "today is the fifth of June (1967). Thirty years ago I lived through the most difficult days of my life. All the Arab countries' preparations for the war at the time were mere propaganda... mere talk over the radio and in the press, not based on facts in any way. On that day I had to choose and to show Jordan's commitment to defending the nation in the face of danger. It was clear that we all had to rise in the face of danger, defend our nation, carry out our duty and honour our pledges. There was a struggle over taking a decision on this matter because had we decided

to avoid entering the battle, the country would have faced an explosion at the internal level at the hands of those who belong to the old school of outbidding, of bragging about imaginary acts of heroism and bravery. Such elements, some of whom are perhaps still lurking amongst us, tend to disappear once they are called on to do service to their country at the time of need."

He noted that Jordan had pledged to stand by the other Arab states and carry out its duty and had to do all it can to defend the nation adding that the Jordanian Armed Forces will continue to serve as a shield to defend the homeland.

"This nation will always be a homeland for the Jor-

dansians of various roots and origins but it will not be a substitute homeland for others and it will continue to offer backing to the Palestinian people in their struggle to regain their rights on their national soil," stressed King Hussein.

During his visit, the King opened a mosque at Muta University and later visited Al Mazar town. He was briefed on restoration work on shrines set up on the tombs of Prophet Mohammed's companions.

King Hussein, who was accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Noor, also visited the new Karak government hospital, inaugurated a nursing department and later toured Karak city.

PNA rejects Israel's W. Bank proposal

(Continued from page 1)

Netanyahu presented his proposal as an updated version of a plan presented to an Israeli cabinet in 1968 by Yigal Allon, a leading figure in the Labour Party and mentor of the late Yitzhak Rabin.

The Allon plan was never formally adopted but served successive Labour governments as a guide for Jewish settlement construction in the West Bank. Under Allon's proposal, Israel would retain about 20 per cent of the West Bank, including

the Jordan valley and areas around Jerusalem, and the Palestinians end up with a single land unit in the rest.

Foreign Minister David Levy said Thursday the government has not yet adopted any plan and the debate in the cabinet is just beginning. "I can tell you that there are many ministers who have no idea what the plan is," he told the Israeli Channel 1 television.

Without mentioning Mr. Netanyahu by name, Mr. Levy criticised the plan for allowing his plan

to reach the media before the cabinet had adopted a position. This, Mr. Levy said, was why the Israeli hawks were already attacking Mr. Netanyahu for giving away too much, while the Palestinians were saying he was not giving enough.

"I have no doubt that it (the disclosure) will cause harm," Mr. Levy said. "It does not leave the government the possibility of steering the negotiations according to its interests." Israeli commentators wrote Thursday that Netanyahu's timing for

releasing the plan was bad, coming at a time when Egyptian mediators are trying to get Israel and the Palestinians back to the negotiating table after months of deadlock. Mr. Netanyahu was apparently playing to an Israeli, not a Palestinian, audience.

Hemi Shalev wrote in the Maariv newspaper. "The fact that the timing... might sabotage the attempts to renew negotiations with the Palestinians just confirms the current assessments of his true priorities as prime minister," Mr. Shalev wrote.

JPA fails to achieve quorum; human rights NGO calls on U.S. to interfere

(Continued from page 1)

have articles in the law either repealed or amended. In spite of disjointed protests and demands to revoke the law hailing from the JPA, other professional associations, opposition and leftist parties and international human rights organisations, the government has been resolved in resisting pressure to rescind the law.

Leftist and opposition deputies in the 80-member Lower House have tried to collect a simple majority of signatures to call an extraordinary parliamentary session in order to debate the law, but their efforts have thus far met with failure.

Also on Thursday, Human Rights Watch/Middle East (HRW/ME) — a non-governmental human rights monitoring organisation — issued a 14-page report on the law, charging that the government has placed "unacceptable infringements" on the right to freedom of expression in the country.

The report, entitled "A Death Knell for Free Expression? The new Amendments to the Press and Publications Law," found that the content of the law was "clearly designed to impose a regime of self-censorship on the press and other publications, preventing them from carrying news and other information related to domestic and foreign affairs."

The report stated that the government lacked "compelling justifications" in introducing the law and said that the bans placed on news content are "arbitrary by two measures: the necessity for such sweeping

restrictions has not been demonstrated and the measures appear disproportionate."

HRW/ME wrote that bans on material "seem designed to bar news and critical reporting about government officials and institutions, and the conduct of domestic and foreign policy, rather than to protect national security or public order."

It further stated that "broadly formulated language" in the law "is unexplained and subject to arbitrary interpretation, and places the burden on journalists and editors to guess what is meant by these ambiguous terms."

"It is, in fact, the state that must specify the meaning of such terms and justify any content ban by reference to specific and tangible concerns for national security or public order," the report said.

It condemned the introduction of the temporary law, enacted by the council of ministers, as "excessive" and said that the measures "extend beyond what is envisioned in the Jordanian Constitution with respect to censorship in times of martial law or a state of emergency, neither of which is currently in effect in Jordan."

The government has consistently maintained that the strict measures were introduced to ensure responsible journalism, particularly among the ranks of weekly newspapers.

Minister of Information Samir Mutawi said in a televised interview last week that the sensational reporting in the weekly press was viewed as "too much, both politically and

morally among most segments of society" and impinged upon Jordan's international credibility.

HRW/ME charged that the government's "remedy" is "wholly disproportionate to the perceived problem."

The sweeping content bans, for example, are bound to affect editorial decisions and journalists' reporting and commentary on a wide range of issues of importance to the public," it said.

It said that the provisions of the new law "appear to constitute arbitrary and discriminatory interference by the state."

In its statement, HRW/ME called on the European Union (EU) to urge the government to repeal the law within the framework of the recently signed EU-Jordan Association Agreement, which specifies respect for human rights and democratic principles as an "essential element" and which includes Jordan's compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

It also appealed to the

U.S. government and Congress to raise Jordan's compliance with the convention in bilateral discussions and to use scheduled hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations and House International Relations Committees and the Appropriations committees of both Houses to query the Clinton administration regarding the issue.

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Israeli embassy employee arrested

(Continued from page 1)

one of those who hang out in front of the embassy to help people seeking visas to fill out forms," the official, who asked not to be identified, was quoted as saying by AFP.

The official said the man "was released but was banned from returning to the gate of the Israeli embassy because of his actions."

The Israeli embassy did not confirm his release and stressed that since his "dis-

appearance he did not show up or call the embassy."

Mr. Tourgeman said the man is welcome back to work but, "if police does not want him to work with the embassy, we want to know why."

"Until now he is considered an employee at the embassy and when he comes back we want to know why he was arrested by police, then we will decide whether he should continue or not," said Mr. Tourgeman.

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Customer Service Orientation

MARKETING and BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

JOB Profile
The Marketing / Business Development Manager is member of the company's upper management group and reports to the General Manager. She/he will work on marketing and sales plans, and develop all the methods and tools accordingly. She/he has the daily management of the marketing department, securing the customer orientation by developing a professional customer service culture, having the customers' demands and needs in focus.

PERSONAL Profile
The Applicant has:
• a relevant theoretical education (minimum MBA in Business Administration), and a post qualifying education in sales and marketing;
• good ability in verbal and written communication in Arabic and English;
• experience in Marketing and Business Development Manager of not less than 5 years in the Telecommunication field.

SALES MANAGER

JOB Profile
The Sales Manager has the responsibility for our client's sales activities, sales budgets and other sales objectives. Her/his tasks are to establish sales agent contacts, to monitor and support the sales representatives, to actually sell to major direct clients, and to develop and train our client's salesmen. The Sales Manager refers to the Marketing and Business Development Manager.

PERSONAL Profile
The Applicant has:
• a relevant theoretical education (minimum BA in Business Administration), and a post qualifying education in sales and marketing;
• good ability in verbal and written communication in Arabic and English;
• experience as Sales Manager of not less than 3 years preferably in the field of consumer products;
• age between 28 and 35 years.

ATTRACTIVE CONDITIONS
Our client offers the successful applicants an exciting and challenging job in a company with an international culture. Salary and incentive packages in accordance with the positions' demands and the successful Applicants' qualifications.

Written application to: Human Resources Division,
CONCEPT for Consultancy, P.O. Box 851 548, Amman 11185

All applications will be dealt with in strict confidence. Our client will only be informed about the application upon agreement between the applicant and our HR Division.

Job opportunities with one of our clients, a newly established enterprise founded on

International Culture • Staff Development
Customer Service Orientation

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER

JOB Profile
The Human Resources Manager has the responsibility for our client's HR activities. Her/his tasks are to establish the departments and to monitor systems for recruitment, evaluation of staff, development and staff training programs. The HR Manager refers to the General Manager.

PERSONAL Profile
The Applicant has:
• a university degree including HR management;
• an above average understanding for her/his own culture while being open to influences from others;
• good aptitude for active interpersonal relations;
• age between 28 and 35 years.

COMMUNICATION ENGINEER

JOB Profile
The Communication Engineer has the daily contact to the local authorities. She/he will follow up our client's technical teams, secure the maintenance and technical support of the external equipment, and develop procedures for optimising interventions. She/he refers to the Technical Service Manager.

PERSONAL Profile
The Applicant has:
• a relevant theoretical education (Electrical Engineering - preferably with major in communications), and a work experience of 5 years in communication and specifically in exchanges;
• experience in data voice engineering.

MIS CO-ORDINATOR

(Management Information Systems)

JOB Profile
The MIS Co-ordinator will establish and secure the communication of our client's documentation manuals, through planning manage the criteria for building up and maintain a comprehensive network computer system including operational database systems, and secure hardware maintenance. The MIS Co-ordinator refers to the Finance Manager.

PERSONAL Profile
The Applicant has:
• a relevant theoretical education (preferably as computer Engineer), and a post qualifying education in structuring administrations;
• good ability in verbal and written Arabic and English;
• age between 28 and 35 years.

ATTRACTIVE CONDITIONS
Our client offers the successful applicants an exciting and challenging job in a company with an international culture. Salary and incentive packages in accordance with the positions' demands and the successful Applicants' qualifications.

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Jordan pushes ahead with capital market reform

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuters

AMMAN — Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) last week auctioned certificates of deposit (CDs) to banks at varied interest rates for the first time as part of a programme to manage monetary policy better, bankers said.

They said the bank's auction of JD70 million (\$99

million) was the first competitive offering of the bi-monthly CDs — its main tool to absorb liquidity and manage interest rates. The offering was oversubscribed by 11 per cent.

"It will allow better control of liquidity and manage interest rates more flexibly to reflect open-market operations," CBJ Governor Ziyad Fariz told Reuters.

The new steps are part of

broad-based financial sector reforms which Jordan is pursuing with World Bank guidance aimed at establishing a sophisticated domestic capital market, bankers said.

They are expected to bolster the credibility of Jordan's monetary policy, which has so far scored high marks from the International Monetary Fund for meeting money

supply and inflation targets for 1997, officials and bankers said.

"The Central Bank will accept the best offers on a quantity auction basis and satisfy banks on the best offers received," said Saleh Al Tayeb, executive director of the open-market operations department at the bank.

Central Bank CDs, which have become key bench-

marks for interest rates, were offered weekly after being introduced in 1993.

Since April they have been issued bi-monthly. Until now they have been issued at fixed interest rates.

The new steps will allow more effectiveness in controlling money supply and influencing interest rates in line with market forces, possibly towards a gradual easing of the tight monetary policy, bankers said.

They will allow the Central Bank to widen its use of monetary instruments to achieve its monetary targets, particularly the key policy aim of preserving the dinar's stability.

"These measures should further achieve added confidence in the dinar," said Dr.

Fariz.

CD yields have been stable at 9.250 per cent for three-month paper and 9.500 per cent for six-month paper for the last one and a half years.

Interest rates are currently fixed by the Central Bank.

The auction system will enable yields to move more in line with supply and demand but the monetary authorities will have at their disposal a number of tools to inject or drain liquidity to ensure rates do not veer away from the target band, officials said.

The Central Bank maintains a high interest rate policy to make dinar-denominated assets attractive and prevent a flow of dinars into dollar-denominated assets.

Bankers say the monetary authorities will continue to keep a four per cent rate differential between dinar and dollar interest yields to prevent a switch into the U.S. currency that could undermine its stable exchange rate.

The move will also help the banking system develop Jordan's first secondary market in CDs by making them, along with future debt instruments, more marketable, bankers said.

The greater flexibility of the CD rates could bring them closer to inter-bank market rates. The Central Bank has been pushing banks to activate the inter-bank market, which still has only a limited role.

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The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates										Prices as at 8/06/97 18:48	
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	MXN	FRF		
US Dollar	1.7277	0.6146	1.4515	115.25	1.3835	1703.80	1.9440	5.8320			
DE Mark	0.5788	-	0.3555	0.3397	66.66	0.8006	965.71	1.1251	3.3748		
GB Sterling	1.6272	2.8125	-	2.3618	187.39	2.2517	2771.91	3.1627	9.4881		
CH Franc	0.8888	118.84	0.4230	-	79.37	0.8528	1173.42	134.00	4.0169		
JP Yen	0.0087	1.4982	0.5329	1.2591	-	1.2002	14.78	168.60	5.0603		
CA Dollar	0.7228	1.2327	0.4447	1.0282	1.20	-	1214.82	1.3862	4.1603		
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0135	0.3604	0.0852	1481.04	0.8117	-	11.48	3.4222		
NL Guilder	0.5144	88.84	0.3158	74.89	59.24	0.7115	875.87	-	3.0001		
FR Franc	0.1715	0.2981	0.1053	24.8737	19.73	0.2371	33.30	33.3000	-		

Middle Eastern Currencies										Prices as at 8/06/97 18:48	
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LEB	EGP		
US Dollar	0.7080	3.7503	0.3770	3.6398	0.3025	3.8727	1.5380	3.3885			
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	-	8.2970	5.1410	0.4273	5.1874	2170.20	4.7874			
GB Sterling	0.2686	0.1888	-	0.1005	0.0807	0.98	409.70	0.9038			
Bahrain Dinar	2.68	1.8781	9.9488	-	0.86	0.8025	9.74	4075.92	8.9913		
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.0831	1.01	422.14	0.9312		
Kuwait Dinar	3.3058	2.3405	12.3977	1.3462	12.03	-	12.14	5078.34	0.9312		
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0211	0.1026	0.9910	0.0824	-	418.36	0.9229		
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4808	2.4408	0.2453	2.3689	0.1969	2.3903	-	2.2060		
Egyptian	0.2850	0.2089	1.1065	0.1112	1.0738	0.0892	1.0836	453.32	-		

Energy			Mid-East Currencies		
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
Brent	18.20	18.30	-	-	-
W. Texas	19.95	19.75	-	-	-
Bonny	18.20	18.30	-	-	-
Dubai	17.50	17.73	-	-	-
UL Gas	205.00	205.00	-	-	-

Energy			Mid-East Currencies		
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2686	0.4809	0.16391	0.38725	30.7446
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.47081	0.16737	0.38843	31.3942
KW Dinar	3.3058	5.71429	2.03211	4.80077	381.098
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.58505	1.63502	3.85208	305.904
CY Pound	1.9365	3.3461	1.1903	2.8121	223.228

Energy			JOD Cross Rates		
Commodity	Unit	Price	Currency	Buy	Sell
Coffee (c/b)	232.17	Spot	US Dollar	0.708	0.710
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1441	Spot	GB Sterling	1.1542	1.16
Sugar (\$/ton)	332.5	Spot	DE Mark	0.4098	0.4116
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot	NL Guilder	0.3639	0.3657
Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot	IT Lira	0.4168	0.4187

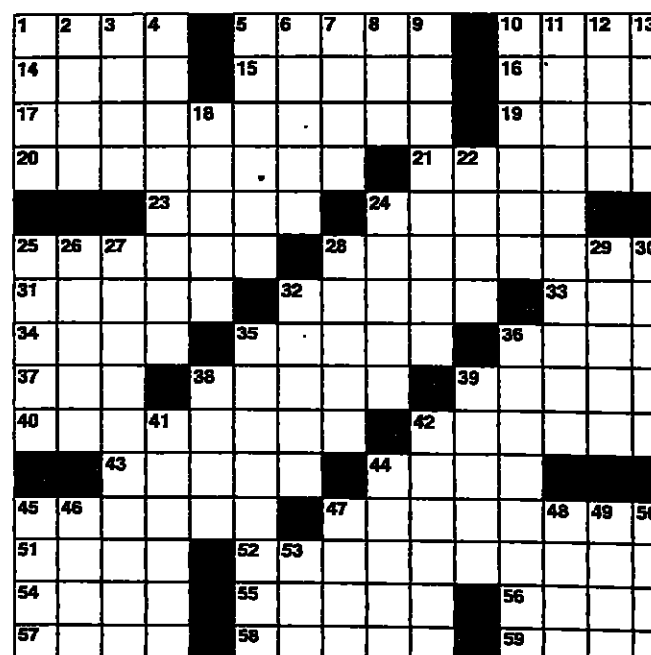
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* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

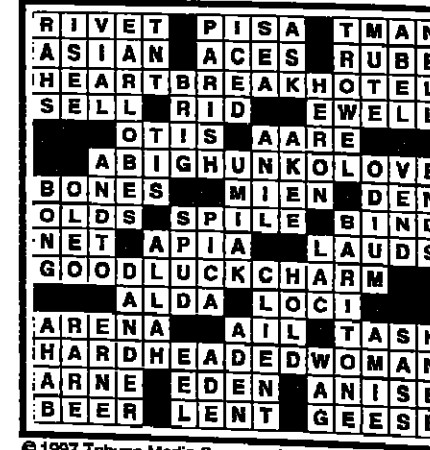
THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
- Attempt
 - Nimbi
 - Vishnu incarnation
 - Neighbor of Ghana
 - Singly
 - Vivacity
 - United states
 - Not fair
 - Cook's herb
 - Black Sea port
 - Drizzle
 - Rivulet
 - Is in store
 - Cutter pole
 - Cattle catchers
 - Glazier's compound
 - Army off.
 - Lobber Lendi
 - Ziti
 - Urgent initials
 - Society starter
 - Two over birdie
 - Tiresome
 - In love
 - Less loyal
 - Oval runner
 - Cheerful
 - Slanted shelter
 - Spooky aura
 - Colonizer of Greenland
 - United states
 - Cellar kind
 - Hitch hurriedly
 - Fertility goddess
 - Exploit
 - Gets up
 - Clockmaker
 - Thomas

- DOWN
- Calaboose
 - Bustle
 - Muslim titles
 - Nonconformist
 - Bedevil
 - On guard
 - Sluggish
 - Beatle mate
 - Iberian miss
 - Buy back
 - United states
 - NASA target
 - Musical Paul



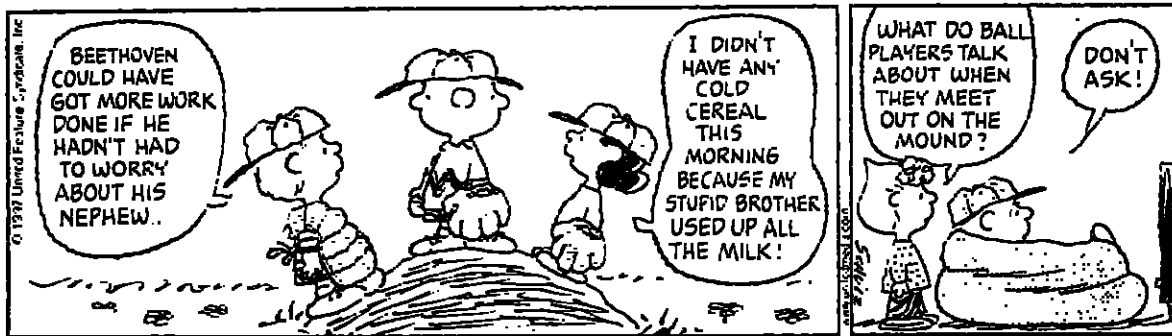
by Richard Thomas



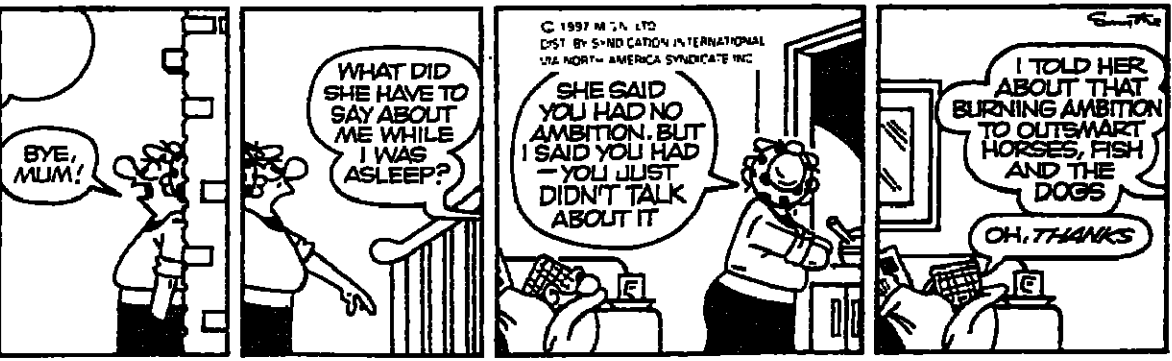
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- 44 Arizona city
45 Indecent
46 Buffalo's lake
47 Greek deity
48 Mitigate
49 Riled mood
50 Door frame
53 Actor Wallace

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson,
Astrologer, Carroll
Richter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) A fellow business associate may not agree with you today, however don't react harshly. Instead, avoid a disagreement and try to reason it out together. Later this evening will be good for having guest in your home.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) If you are a going to deal today with individuals in a fast-paced business, you will have to think along more modern and realistic lines. This evening will be a good time to consult with fellow associate for a new project.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You may have to change your recreational plans for the weekend, however your friends won't mind. Keep an eye on your finances so that you will have extra funds in case of an emergency develops in the days ahead.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You should not allow a fast-talking acquaintance change your mind on an important issue. Make a schedule for the day today, and stick to it otherwise you will discover that you will be behind in your activities.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You should not allow a few unimportant chores today to keep you from seeing some interesting friends. Use your time constructively later this evening to have some fun with close friends and your loved ones.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Your first priority today should be anything of a financial nature, as matters along these lines will tend to operate to your benefit. Later this evening will be a good time to go out on the town with your mate to a romantic spot.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Don't allow your loved ones interfere today with some important business plans you must make. If you are asked later this evening to volunteer some time to the community, do so and thereby make a good impression.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Figure out how to handle your daily routines more efficiently today, and your career activities will seem to decrease greatly. Spend more time later this evening at home with your loved ones and thereby maintain harmony.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Put aside money and property affairs today, and go after your personal wishes. You should not allow a friend to sidetrack your plans for a method of operation in dealing with any current projects you are given.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) If a close friend asks for your help today, don't hesitate to lend this person a hand, as he or she has done you many valuable favours in previous days. Later this evening will be good for seeking knowledgeable people.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't waste any time today worrying about matters over which you have no control. Be sure to handle any important correspondence which you have neglected and thereby make a good impression upon a superior.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Avoid a disagreement with a long-time friend at all costs or there could be great difficulty in dealing with he or she in days ahead. It may be wise to set up a more practical and realistic budget at this time thereby having extra funds.

Birthstone of June: Pearl — Moon Stone

Trading at AFM rises sharply during past two weeks

AMMAN (J.T.) — Foreign investment in western Asia is gradually shifting from the Gulf's oil industry to the production and services sectors in the Middle East, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development report.

According to the report, Jordan as well as Israel, Cyprus, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen, all non-oil countries are attracting large sums of foreign investment which has decreased drastically in Gulf countries.

In the early eighties, Gulf countries attracted 96 per cent of foreign investment in the region (western Asia) but the percentage went down to 67 per cent in the early nineties and stabilised evenly in the region by the mid-nineties.

The Amman Financial Market (AFM) has benefited highly from this new investment shift in the past few weeks. AFM Director Walid Shair said that the last two weeks have witnessed a 14 point increase in the regular market index. Such an indication means about JD35 million of trade.

Brokers also said that they were only able to

execute half of their purchase orders during the week due to the limited supply of shares and noted that despite profit taking, share prices increased aggressively Sunday due to foreign buying. Later in the week, prices edged down slightly.

Ziad Basha of the British Bank said this current rise in the market could only be preserved if the Social Security Corporation and the Jordanian Investment Corporation unloaded some of their shares.

Broker Majed Khreisha said the government's drive towards implementing new laws and directives was behind the current interest in the AFM.

Other brokers said they had orders to buy at certain price limits and, as such, gave a subduing effect to buying on Monday and Tuesday. The loss of interest Monday and Tuesday came as a result of local investors' eagerness to make large profits resulting in foreign investors' prudence towards share prices.

In general, the volume of trade at the AFM jumped by JD9,666,696 to reach a remarkable high of

JD16,866,696 (57.3 per cent increase) as 5,423,718 shares were traded in 4,575 contracts, raising the AFM regular market index to 160.34 points.

Industry took up 68.2 per cent of the volume of trade with 3,351,097 shares worth JD11,510,628 in 2689 contracts contributing to a 2.45 point index increase to 129.

Closest behind was the banking sector with 1,504,522 shares worth JD4,442,795 traded in 1,173 contracts slightly raising the index to 195.71 points.

The service sector lagged behind with 550,338 shares worth JD874,268 traded in 681 contracts and an index of 112.24 points.

And, as has been the case for the past few weeks, there was meagre interest in the insurance sector as 17,761 shares worth JD39,004 were traded in 32 contracts giving an index of 116.

After comparing the share prices of the 95 companies which were traded, shares of 42 companies increased, 20 held steady and 33 decreased.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Prices of soft drinks in small glass bottles may rise slightly

**** THE PRICE** of a Pepsi in a small glass bottle may rise by 20 fils from next month following a decision by Industry, Trade and Supply Minister Hani Mulki to float the prices of all soft drinks in returnable glass containers of all sizes from July 1, 1997.

Fawzi Al Zein, the general manager of the Pepsi company in Jordan, said the prices of large size glass containers (bottles) will not be affected by the decision and the soft drink firms will work to have such prices fixed. Small-size bottles now cost 120 fils each whereas each large-size bottle costs 440 fils.


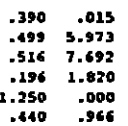
The prices of soft drinks in tin and plastic containers of all size were floated in April 1996 and are selling now for 250 fils for a tin container and 900 fils for a large non-returnable plastic container.

According to the decision, the government left the door open for a possible review of the measure by announcing that the flotation of the prices will continue until further

notice. But Mr. Zein believes that the decision will not be needing a review as the prices will not be much affected. He said the soft drinks companies "will resort to make qualitative improvements on the containers and the size of the tin containers may be larger to offset keeping the same prices for other containers."

Mr. Zein expected a drop in soft drink prices "over a period of time" and linked such a drop to production cost variables determined by the prices of raw material inputs that enter into the local processing of the material.

The decision, which was published in the Arabic newspapers Friday, obliged the companies to deliver soft drinks to all the regions in the country and to print the price clearly on the cover of each bottle. The companies were also required to abide by the Jordanian specifications and standards and any other conditions requested by other official bodies (Al Ra'i).

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET															
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN															
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179															
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (31/05/1997 - 04/06/1997)															
WEEKLY REPORT															
															
TRADING THE LAST 2 WEEKS	COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE PRICE	TURNOVER MARKET SHARES	NO. OF TRADING DAYS	
HIGH	LOW				EXECUTED	JD							PRICE		
162.000	255.000	ARAB BANK	11.8	1.57	41	1480	378200	255.50	256.00	255.00	255.50	-	255.541	0.34	5
2.060	1.760	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	-	0.00	653	999488	2243777	2.06	2.34	2.04	2.06	-	2.245	2.380	5
5.500	4.650	CAIRO AMMAN BANK	11.4	2.73	6	6130	33708	5.50	5.50	5.50	5.50	-	5.499	0.041	3
3.110	2.970	BANK OF JORDAN	6.5	0.00	16	10908	34187	3.10	3.17	3.10	3.10	-	3.136	1.04	4
1.100	970	MID.EAST INV. BK.	61.1	0.00	32	15900	15824	1.02	1.02	0.95	0.96	-0.06	0.995	159	5
2.230	2.160	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	7.8	7.42	39	17909	41213	2.19	2.33	2.28	2.28	-0.09	2.301	1.44	5
4.950	4.650	THE HOUSING BK.	14.9	3.90	162	279350	1422509	4.92	5.20	4.90	4.97	-0.05	5.092	1.117	5
2.790	2.550	JOR. HOUSING BANK	10.4	0.00	56	40156	123445	2.77	2.98	2.74	2.98	-0.21	2.830	402	5
1.810	1.780	JOR. CHIF. BANK	4.8	0.75	50	27284	78134	1.79	1.83	1.79	1.80	-0.01	1.803	1.86	5
3.600	3.500	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	17.3	0.00	1	500	1800	3.40	3.60	3.40	3.60	-	3.400	0.05	1
3.800	3.610	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	15.2	3.23	30	9466	36104	3.80	3.85	3.73	3.73	-0.07	3.814	0.04	4
1.260	1.180	UNION TR. SAV. INV.	104.4	0.00	12	4149	4843	1.18	1.20	1.14	1.19	-0.01	1.168	0.38	4
3.320	3.170	JOR. INV. TR. BANK	20.2	0.00	26	5851	18644	3.17	3.28	3.14	3.14	-0.03	3.186	0.59	5
1.250	1.000	BEIT-AL-NAL (BEYNA)	-	12.40	39	11850	15618	1.25	1.40	1.21	1.21	-0.04	1.318	0.593	5
1.140	1.080	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	-	0.00	10	6100	4399	1.22	1.13	1.10	1.12	-	1.120	0.041	4
BANKS SECTOR 1173 1504522 4442795 INDEX NUMBER: 195.71 CHANGE: + 0.167															
2.850	2.850	JORDAN INSURANCE	12.4	5.17	1	5000	14500	2.85	2.90	2.90	2.90	-0.05	2.900	1.00	1
1.700	1.400	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	4.8	11.70	16	4100	7020	1.62	1.77	1.70	1.71	-0.09	1.712	1.86	3
1.850	1.850	YARMOUK INSUR.	9.8	0.11	4	3500	8475	1.85	1.85	1.85	1.85	-	1.850	0.25	4
2.300	2.300	BOKI LAND INSUR.	6.8	0.00	2	234	543	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	-	2.301	0.30	1
1.900	1.820	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.2	5.41	7	4575	8454	1.82	1.85	1.83	1.85	-0.03	1.848	0.29	3
5.600	5.410	ALATIR AL-ARABI	13.4	0.00	2	350	2013	5.40	5.75	5.75	5.75	-0.15	5.751	0.25	2
INSURANCE SECTOR 32 17761 29004 INDEX NUMBER: 116.00 CHANGE: + 1.647															
1.730	1.630	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.2	5.92	282	196576	347346	1.72	1.81	1.68	1.69	-0.03	1.767	1.311	5
1.450	1.320	JORD. ELECTRICITY	8.0	8.52	15	24430	33936	1.45	1.48	1.35	1.35	-0.10	1.389	0.14	4
5.960	4.900	ARAB INTL. HOTELS	17.8	3.45	2	1750	10179	5.96	6.10	5.79	5.79	-0.17	5.817	0.19	2
1.550	1.500	SHIPPING LINES	15.3	4.96	18	11225	28048	2.31	2.43	2.36	2.42	-0.31	2.499	1.62	5
1.270	1.000	NATL. PORTFOLIO	-	0.00	237	244100	324833	1.25	1.38	1.26	1.28	-0.03	1.339	4.882	5
860	850	REAL ESTATE INV.	11.8	7.06	1	50	43	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	-	0.860	0.01	1
490	480	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	25.2	0.00	3	1500	740	4.8	5.00	4.9	4.9	-0.01	4.93	0.04	2
7.000	6.900	ALARA T	12.5	7.14	1	200	1400	6.90	7.00	7.00	7.00	-	7.000	0.10	1
6.800	6.800	AD-DUSTOUR	19.5	4.41	6	533	2855	6.18	5.90	4.80	4.80	-1.38	5.356	0.30	5
1.350	1.270	MID. EAST HOTELS	19.4	0.00	6	2350	3015	1.28	1.30	1.27	1.27	-0.01	1.283	0.04	2
2.950	3.000	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	7.6	0.00	17	15800	46878	3.00	3.02	2.90	2.90	-0.10	2.967	1.56	4
1.000	970	SAKIA EDUCATION	-	0.00	19	19674	19598	0.98	1.05	0.98	1.05	-0.07	0.996	0.37	3
1.690	1.640	UNITED CO.	8.0	6.55	66	29700	51771	1.69	1.78	1.67	1.68	-0.01	1.743	0.59	5
680	650	UNION LAND DEV.	-	0.00	8	2450	1679	0.68	0.71	0.65	0.65	-0.03	0.665	0.049	3
SERVICES SECTOR 681 550328 874268 INDEX NUMBER: 112.24 CHANGE: - 0.257															
1.030	990	ATTAJANER	-	0.00	1	1500	1545	1.03	1.03	1.03	1.03	-	1.030	0.04	1
4.100	3.720	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	27.6	2.68	563	1708942	7239423	4.09	4.45	3.91	4.10	-0.01	4.236	2.827	5
3.750	3.150	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	10.8	2.36	66	26244	105427	3.75	4.14	3.85	3.90	-0.15	4.015	1.594	5
6.700	6.700	JOR. CEMENT	15.7	2.94	88	113922	792620	6.58	7.05	6.70	6.75	-0.17	6.958	1.43	5
9.500	9.270	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.5	9.07	122	30099	300425	9.50	10.04	9.50	9.80	-0.30	9.981	0.70	5
6.100	6.000	JORDAN TANKING	7.4	5.00	6	340	2040	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	-	6.000	0.34	2
1.280	1,050	MOULIN INDUSTRIES	10.8	8.00	9	11900	14160	1.17	1.35	1.17	1.25	-0.08	1.190	1.10	4
2.020	1.860	INDUSTRIAL COMMAG.	-	0.00	51	14480	28490	1.87	2.07	1.95	1.97	-0.10	2.037	2.90	5
6.800	6.500	JOR. WOODEN MILLS	10.4	5.03	18	3800	25334	6.43	6.70	6.60	6.60	-0.03	6.667	0.95	3
3.790	3.540	ARAB FARM. MANT.	10.6	5.19	254	160852	631139	3.76	4.00	3.80	3.85	-0.09	3.924	1.787	5
7.200	6.700	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	7.0	2.34	2	1700	11510	6.70	6.80	6.70	6.80	-0.10	6.771	0.08	1
2.300	2.250	JORDAN DAIRY	7.8	10.63	2	118	771	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	-	2.297	0.07	2
1.430	1.390	JOR. PIPES MANUF.	17.4	5.71	16	4140	5827	1.40	1.43	1.40	1.40	-	1.407	0.17	4
7.800	7.800	ARAB CEM. DISTRIB.	22.7	4.05	1	100	741	7.80	7.80	7.41	7.41	-0.39	7.410	0.15	1
1.180	1.130	KAFIA TEXTILES	12.9	4.76	124	71250	384966	5.03	5.54	5.10	5.25	-0.22	5.403	1.108	5
5.050	4.600	JOR. ROCCOOL IND.	7.2	8.14	31	8010	25171	3.06	3.20	3.07	3.07	-0.01	3.142	1.14	4
3.220	3.060	ARAB ALUM. IND.	10.8	0.00	117	160450	82927	3.06	3.20	3.07	3.07	-0.01	3.142	1.14	4
530	500	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	10.8	0.00	117	160450	82927	5.03	5.54	5.10	5.25	-0.22	5.403	1.108	5
1.100	1.020	ARAB PAPER CONV. IND.	32.1	0.00	73	67954	73125	1.04	1.11	1.05	1.05	-0.01	1.076	1.942	5
560	520	NATIONAL IND.	-	0.00	39	39500	25121	0.56	0.58	0.54	0.54	-0.02	0.558	0.32	4
760	700	INTERMED. PAPER CHEN.	-	0.00	30	12400	8201	0.72	0.76	0.68	0.68	-0.04	0.742	0.31	4
650	600	JOR. ROCCOOL IND.	-	0.00	13	6350	3874	0.61	0.64	0.59	0.59	-0.02	0.610	0.12	3
2.130	2.130	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	18.0	5.00	2	350	703	2.13	2.02	2.00	2.00	-0.13	2.009	0.23	2
2.900	2,600	KATL. CABLE WIRE. NFAC	43.8	0.00	17	8593	25030	2.60	3.00	2.73	2.73	-0.08	2.913	0.72	5
700	610	JOR. SULPHO-CHEN	-	0.00	54	24550	15466	0.61	0.68	0.58	0.58	-0.05	0.610	0.14	5
1.430	1.410	ARAB PAPER CHEN.	18.3	4.90	147	7									
1.510	1.410	UNIV. WOOD IND.	54.3	-0.18	32	7500	11097	1.46	1.52	1.42	1.43	-0.03	1.480	1.50	4
1.190	1.130	JOR. LUMBS. RESOURCES	15.1	8.93	217	118875	139361	1.14	1.20	1.12	1.12	-0.02	1.172	1.486	5
1.860	1.380	KATL. CEMENT	4.4	4.70	70	63023	93224	1.46	1.53	1.45	1.49	-0.03	1.479	0.75	5
1.690	1.860	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.9	0.00	208	152650	136770	1.86	1.93	1.87	1.87	-0.07	1.923	1.368	5
1.640	1.530	AL-KAT RESIST WEAR	55.3	0.00	139	52000	81532	1.53	1.59	1.51	1.57	-0.04	1.568	0.93	5
1.120	1.000	JOR. TOBACCO	42.2	0.00	128	106550	122998	1.15	1.20	1.13	1.14	-0.01	1.148	1.066	5
1.920	1.870	UNION CHE. & FEG.	40.9	0.00	74	56600	53574	1.87	1.97	1.89	1.90	-0.03	1.947	1.258	4
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR 2689 3351097 11510428 INDEX NUMBER: 129.00 CHANGE: + 1.947															
GRAND TOTAL 4575 5423718 16864696 INDEX NUMBER: 160.34 CHANGE: + 0.892															
															
400	380	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	-	0.00	1	500	195	40	39	39	39	-0.01	390	0.015	1
510	430	JOR. TRADE FAC.	12.8	0.00	130	25080	125118	51	53	47	48	-0.58	50	0.47	5
450	450	ARAB FIB. IND.	12.0	0.00	229	769200	397206	49	55	49	52	-0.03	516	1.792	5
650	600	UNION IND. 50T	-	0.00	116	400349	78804	68	71	68	68	-	196	1.620	5
1.450	1.120	KARA FOR INVESTMENT	51.2	0.00	1	100	125	1.19	1.25	1.25	1.25	-0.04	1.250	0.00	1
650	610	AL-DAMLIYAN 75T	65.3	0.00	80	135281	59478	65	71	65	68	-0.03	640	0.966	4
780	730	AL-SHARD IND. 75T	288.7	0.00	50	115173	61686	78	83	76	82	-0.07	803	1.167	5
570	530	ARAB FOOD	10.8	0.00	38	120200	11016	53	54	54	54	-0.01	545	0.77	4
710	480	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	49.5	0.00	38	56650	25007	44	47	43	43	-0.01	441	1.133	5
250	230	JOR. LUMBS. MATCH-YEMCO	-	0.00	32	44450	10671	23	25	23	23	-	240	0.215	5
500	490	KATL. TEXTILE	-	0.00	20	21650	10541	49	50	47	47	-0.02	487	0.64	3
580	550	KATKAR DYES & MOUTDS	-	0.00	3	4000	2130	55	53	53	53	-0.02	530	0.147	1
450	420	MIDWEST FIBERS. 75T	-	0.00	6	20440	8175	42	45	43					

Opening of Jericho Stadium sees Jordan, Palestine draw 0-0

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — In the first international soccer match in the Palestinian self rule areas in 30 years, the Kingdom's national team Friday drew 0-0 against their Palestinian counterpart in the match marking the inauguration of Jericho Stadium.

More than 10,000 fans attended the match, scheduled to be attended by the Palestinian President Yasser Arafat who deputised Saeb Ereikat, a member in the Palestinian Council of Ministers to attend. Jordanian referee Omar Bishrawi supervised the match along with Walid Saadi and Ali Sitan. The construction of the \$1.5 million stadium was financed by the Japanese government.

Jordan's team, which crossed the King Hussein Bridge into the West Bank Thursday evening after several days delay following the refusal of the Israeli embassy in Amman to grant them visas.

The 31-man delegation, headed by Hisham Asfour, secretary general of Jordan's Soccer Federation (JSF), is expected to tour Palestinian cities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, no matches are expected against any Israeli teams.

In the past two years, Jordanian and Palestinian soccer teams exchanged visits and held several matches. Jordan's Al Wihdat, Al Faisali and Al Jazireh played several games in Gaza, Hebron and other cities.

In 1995, the Israeli Arab soccer team of Kfar Kana visited Jordan and played two matches against Al Wihdat and Al Faisali.

Dawood keeps lead in speed test

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan's Drivers Open Champion Ahmad Dawood kept his reign atop the Pepsi Speed Test Championship with 89 points although he came in No. 13 in the Pepsi Speed Test Friday organised by the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ). Yasser Jarrah came second with 79 points and Yassir Qomq came third with 76 points. Dawood, in a Nissan Bluebird SSS, clocked 02:58.28 and faced a slight accident to his car in the third run. Gauth Bilbeisi clocked the best time in the final result of the Pepsi Speed Test with 02:37.01 in his Toyota Starlet TRD.

China leads 6th Asian Women's Handball Championship

By Roufan Nahhas
and Khaled Harb
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — China held on to first place with 6 points after beating Taipei 32-12 (11-4) Friday while titleholders South Korea overtook Uzbekistan 41-16 (24-8) on the third day of the 6th Asian Women's Handball Championship currently underway at Al Hussein Youth City's Sports Palace.

The Chinese team displayed total teamwork and played flawlessly feeling comfortable with their team's results so far.

China established the pressure on the Taipei defence who looked disorganised and slow in handling the ball.

Depending on the wings for more attacks the Chinese team ended the first half 11-4.

China had total control ending the match 32-12. In earlier matches, China beat Japan 27-22 (11-13) Uzbekistan 29-21 (14-9).

China will meet South Korea on Monday in a long awaited match expected to be one of the strongest in the championship.

Asian champs South Korea are in the second place with four points after beating Uzbekistan in an easy match 41-16.

South Korea displayed professional skills against Uzbekistan and took control from the beginning to finish the first half 24-8.

Uzbekistan tried to take control of the match but the experience and the quick movement of the Korean players put all their attempts on halt.

Uzbekistan finally surrendered to the Korean with 41-16.

Japan is in the second place with two points after

beating Taipei 25-12 (12-7) Thursday and losing to China in a fast paced match 27-22 (11-13).

Held under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Sunayya Bint Al Hassan, the competition groups top teams including South Korea, Japan, China, Uzbekistan and Chinese Taipei. Kazakhstan declined participation for financial reasons.

The top three teams in the competition will qualify for the World Championship due to be held in August in Germany.

While the Kingdom is hosting the event, the Jordanian team will not take part in the competition. However, the national team may have the chance to play some friendly matches against some of the visiting teams.

Schedule of matches (At 4.30 p.m. and 6.15 p.m.)

Saturday	Japan vs. Uzbekistan (at 6.15 p.m.)
Sunday	Japan vs. South Korea Taipei vs. Uzbekistan
Monday	China vs. South Korea

Standings

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
China	3	3	-	-	88	55	6
S. Korea	2	2	-	-	86	26	4
Japan	2	1	-	1	47	39	2
Uzbek.	2	-	-	2	37	70	-
Taipei	3	-	-	3	34	102	-

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What they're saying at Roland Garros

* Long haul for Amanda:

Beaten women's singles semi-finalist Amanda Coetzer just loves to go for a long jog to keep her in trim on her day off, but she's been clocking up the miles in the air too. Since January, the diminutive South African has logged some 88,000km on her way to and from tournaments. That's about 350 miles (550 km) a day. Dubbed the 'little assassin' — she stands just 5ft 2in (1m 57) tall — Coetzer has played 74 tour matches this year, more than any other player. And she has beaten Steffi Graf three times in the process, ending the German's title dreams here in the quarter-finals.

* Making a sharp exit:

Marcelo Rios told his coach he wanted to return home to Chile as soon as possible after losing his fourth-round match to Hicham Arazi. Two tickets in Rios' name were swiftly reserved for a flight home just hours after he came off court. The confident Chilean had originally reserved tickets for Sunday, expecting to reach the men's singles final.

* Tugging at the heart-strings:

One of the dozen racket stringers here received an unusual request from a fan with a big weakness for American doubles star Gigi Fernandez. The fan offered the stringer a 200 Franc note (about \$30) to let him kiss the player's racket. The request was granted — and the lovesick fan got to keep his cash.

* Best Quote —

"It's like comparing night and day," Monica Seles, asked to rate the styles of Martina Hingis and former World No. 1 Steffi Graf.

Bruguera, Kuerten reach French final

PARIS (AFP) — Sergi Bruguera moved one match away from a third French Open singles crown here on Friday when he saw off a magnificent challenge from Australia's Patrick Rafter to score a 6-7 (6/8) 6-1, 7-5, 7-6 (7/1) and reach Sunday's final.

The match, playing in sweltering heat, lasted 2hrs 52mins.

The 26-year-old Spaniard, the sixteenth and last-surviving seed left in the draw, will now play Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil who earlier defeated Belgian qualifier Filip Dewulf 6-1, 3-6, 6-1, 7-6 (7/4).

Bruguera, a winner here in 1993 and 1994, turned the match around on a dramatic third set when he stormed back to win five games in a row after trailing 2-5.

And although the 24-year-old Queenslander showed tremendous character to come back after going behind to an early



Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil in action during his match against Filip Dewulf of Belgium in the semi final of the French Open at Roland Garros stadium (Reuters photo)

service break to hold two set points in the fourth — the Spaniard's looping top-spin from the baseline and bullet passing shots eventually made the difference.

Bruguera, winner of 14 career ATP titles — all but one of them on clay, is looking for his first tournament victory since Prague in 1994.

His ranking plunged to 81st last season after sustaining an ankle injury but this year he has climbed back to 19th after reaching two finals — at Milan and Key Biscayne.

Rafter, who was clearly the favourite of the packed centre-court crowd for his non-stop aggression — the likes of which has not been seen on the red clay Roland Garros showcourt since John McEnroe's famous loss to Ivan Lendl in the 1984 final.

Thrust team reach 860 kph, retreat from desert heat

By Roufan Nahhas
with agency dispatches

AMMAN — Britain's land speed record challengers packed up their jet-propelled supercar on Thursday after sweltering heat and the state of a desert test track made further speed trials in Jordan impossible.

The Thrust Supersonic team, who had hoped the car would reach speeds in Jordan close to the world record of 1,019.44 kph (633.47 miles per hour), said their fastest run so far of 860 kph (540 mph) on Wednesday had damaged the car's suspension.

The team was preparing for a September assault in the United States on the world speed record and the speed of sound (about 750 mph/1,200 kph).

"It is now quite clear that we have gone as fast as we can on the Jafr desert," team leader and current world record holder Richard Noble said in a statement.

He said the desert mud-flats of Al Jafr, about 200 km (125 miles) south of Amman, were too rough for the car to go any faster and even early morn-

ing temperatures were rapidly becoming too hot to drive the car safely.

But he declared the trials in Jordan a success and vowed the car would be in good shape to take on a U.S. rival in the Nevada desert in September in a head-to-head challenge.

"The Jordan testing is done — we are ready to go to the U.S.," said Noble.

Last November Noble had to scramble to save his 10-tonne car from flash floods on the same Al Jafr test track.

On Wednesday the car's rear suspension was damaged when a bracket failed during the 540mph run.

"I am confident that with a strengthened bracket, this car is capable of supersonic speeds on the smoother surface of the Black Rock Desert in Nevada," said British fighter pilot Andy Green, who has been driving the Thrust car on the 16-km (10-mile) Al-Jafr test track.

The 16.5-metre (54-foot) car, powered by two jet engines from a Phantom warplane, has a maximum design speed of 850 mph (1,360 kph) but has so far failed to match the bold predic-

tions of its designers.

It will be airlifted back to Britain on a giant Antonov 124 transport plane.

Noble is racing to claim the record before U.S. driver Craig Breedlove, who had to postpone his own challenge last year when his car, the Spirit of America, was damaged in a high speed accident in the black rock desert.

A world record was never on the cards in Al Jafr because the track was not long enough.

To notch up a record the car's speed must be measured over the same 1.6 km (1 mile) track on two separate runs, in opposite directions. At 600 mph the car, even with powerful brakes and the parachute, needs about seven miles to slow down.

Last word from the world land speed record holder to Jordan.

"We would like to thank His Majesty King Hussein, HRH Prince Faisal, the Royal Jordanian Air Force, the Jordanian people and our sponsors Royal Jordanian Airlines who made it possible," he told the Jordan Times.

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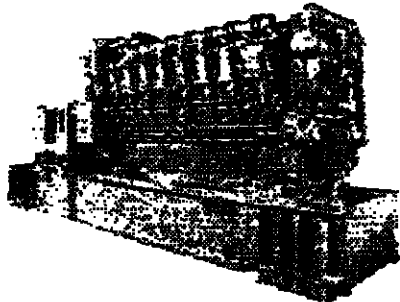
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ISRAELIS AGAINST OCCUPATION: A left-wing Israeli woman, flanked by small Israeli and Palestinian flags, demonstrates against 30 years of Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories Thursday. The dozens of women dressed in black clothing also called for an end of Israeli occupation of east Jerusalem in the week of the 30th anniversary of the 1967 Middle East war and the occupation of east Jerusalem from Jordanian forces (Photo by Reuters)

U.N. draft would bill Israel \$1.7m against Cana damage

UNITED NATIONS (R) — A resolution was introduced in a U.N. committee Thursday requiring Israel to pay more than \$1.7 million for damage resulting from its shelling of a U.N. base at Cana, in southern Lebanon, last year in which about 100 civilians taking refuge were killed.

The resolution was submitted to the General Assembly's administrative and budgetary committee by Tanzania on behalf of the so-called "group of 77" developing countries — now totalling 132 mem-

bers — and China. Under the draft, still subject to negotiation in the committee and eventual endorsement by the General Assembly, Israel would have to pay \$844,318 for damage to U.N. property directly attributable to the April 18, 1996, shelling and \$880,300 for the relocation of the Fijian battalion of the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which had been based at Cana.

The draft would also recommend that the General Assembly appropriate an as yet undetermined sum for

UNIFIL's budget for the period July 1, 1997 to June 30, 1998.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan has proposed a budget of about \$122 million for that 12-month period. UNIFIL, established in 1978 and comprising some 4,500 troops and 490 civilians, has an accumulated deficit of about \$177 million because of unpaid assessments by U.N. members.

A U.N. inquiry last year found that Israel's shelling of the Cana camp, during a drive against Hizbollah guerrillas

who had fired rockets into northern Israel, was unlikely to have been the result of gross technical or procedural errors, though that could not be completely ruled out.

Israel said the camp, in which about 100 sheltering Lebanese civilians were killed and many wounded, was hit accidentally when artillery on the Israeli-Lebanon border shelled positions near the U.N. camp from which mortar fire had been directed at an Israeli patrol.

Khartoum calls on imams to mobilise support for 'jihad'

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan's Islamic regime has called on imams to mobilise support for the "jihad" or holy war against rebel groups operating in the south of the country, reports said Friday.

The Islamic regime came to power in Khartoum in 1989 has been fighting a long civil war against mainly Christian rebels. Earlier this year, the rebels launched a new offensive taking ground from government forces.

On Thursday, officials from the ruling National Congress Party met leading imams, urging them to use their influence to persuade more young men to join the country's defence forces, reports said Friday. The imams should "sharpen the spirit of the jihad among the people to confront foreign aggression," one daily reported the officials as saying.

The pro-government Alwan daily reported Friday that "Eritrean troops, armed with Israeli-supplied heavy weapons," were massing in positions facing the Sudanese border villages of Awad and Sabdarat "in preparation for an imminent offensive on Sudanese territories."

No official confirmation has been made. Khartoum has in the past accused Washington and its neighbours Eritrea and Ethiopia of backing the anti-government forces.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa George Moose last month urged the isolation of Sudan, calling the Khartoum regime a supporter of "international terrorism."

Speaking to the U.S. senate foreign relations committee, Mr. Moose said that Washington's

Two killed, 70 wounded in east Sudan

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Two civilians were killed and more than 70 were wounded in military operations in eastern Sudan, a government official was quoted Thursday as saying.

Over 70 Koranic students were wounded in the recent military operations and two others were killed by land mines planted by Eritreans near the Koranic schools, the independent Alwan daily quoted the commissioner of Hamashkour province, Salah Eddin Abdallah, as saying. Mr. Abdallah said civilians had received "advanced military training," adding that a militia "is now stationed along the province's eastern borderline" with Eritrea.

The Eritrean aggression is targeting the Hamashkour civilians because they constitute an asset to Islam, a matter which frightens (Eritrean President) Assanef Ayoub, he said.

Hamashkour is famous for its Koranic schools. Sudanese opponents of the Islamic regime in Khartoum united in the Democratic National Alliance began an offensive from the Eritrean-Ethiopian border and in the south of the country last January.

The Khartoum government accuses Eritrea as well as Ethiopia and Somalia of backing the insurgents.

A Sudanese MP from the area, Mousa Hussein Dirar, meanwhile charged that Israel is backing Eritrean forces as well as the Sudanese opposition alliance massed along the border.

The allegation was made in an interview that appeared Thursday in the Al-Naba daily.

objectives were "clear and unequivocal: To isolate Sudan and to contain its support for insurgents and terrorists and to oblige the Sudanese government ... to change its domestic and international conduct."

Coming under increasing pressure from the rebels, the government recently announced that students who sat for exams last month would have to proceed to military training camps as of June 21, part of a series of measures aimed at boosting the numbers of young people joining up.

In London Thursday the Sudanese opposition leader Sadeq Al Mahdi claimed the Islamic-led government in Khartoum is showing "signs of weakness" and some garisons are considering deserting.

Mr. Mahdi said democracy must be the basis for any settlement but that the opposition had been forced into military action to topple the government "as a last resort."

The Khartoum-appointed commissioner of southern Qoqriyal province, Paul John Akot, was quoted Friday as claiming that a "desperate attempt" by the main rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to capture Qoqriyal town had been "foiled" by government troops, with the loss of 500 rebels.

In recent weeks the SPLA has attacked government-held positions in south Sudan's Bahrel Ghazal state, reportedly seizing a number of towns, including Rumbek and Warab.

C8LUMN

U2 tour in United States fails to live up to hype

LOS ANGELES (R) — Irish rock band U2's ambitious "Popmart" stadium tour appears to have fallen short of its hype with at least two shows already cancelled, possibly due to slow ticket sales. "About 20 per cent of the dates have been less than overwhelming," Paul Wasserman, U2's publicist in Los Angeles said. "One hopes for total capacity everywhere but that doesn't always happen."

The band has cancelled a concert in Philadelphia scheduled for Saturday. Wasserman said the move was due to a scheduling conflict with a Tibetan Freedom concert in New York but others claim slow ticket sales were behind the change of plans.

Michael Kennedy's wife urges end to babysitter probe

BOSTON (R) — The wife of Michael Kennedy, under investigation for allegedly having an affair with his family's underage babysitter, said the probe against her estranged husband should be dropped. "Now that I have been interviewed by the district attorney's office, I hope that the district attorney will conclude that there is no reason to proceed further with this matter," Victoria Gifford Kennedy said in a statement released by her lawyer. The prosecutor reportedly has been putting pressure on witnesses to cooperate in the case. Victoria Gifford Kennedy, the daughter of sportscaster Frank Gifford, told prosecutors on Wednesday she had no knowledge of any sex between her husband and the babysitter while the baby sitter was under age, Boston newspapers reported.

Maxim's French wines double forecast in auction

PARIS (R) — In one of France's biggest wine sales, century-old Paris restaurant Maxim's has auctioned off 8,000 of its 100,000 bottles of great vintage wines that age had made too expensive for diners. Auctioneer Jacques Tujan told Reuters the sale netted more than nine million francs, almost doubling forecasts. The stars of the auction were 12 bottles of 1945 Chateau Mouton-Rothschild Pauillac bought for 532,000 francs by an unidentified German as a 85th birthday gift to an American soldier who liberated his village in 1945.

Flying raccoon knocks out Florida driver

DAYTONA BEACH (R) — A raccoon jumped through the windshield of a pickup truck, shattering the glass and knocking the truck driver unconscious, the Daytona Beach News-Journal reported. The driver's 19-year-old son, David Antienowicz, safely steered the truck to a stop, the newspaper said. The animal was riding on a garbage truck when it leapt onto the windshield of the truck driven by John David Antienowicz, 39. "The raccoon came through the windshield of my truck and knocked me out," he told the newspaper. The elder Antienowicz regained consciousness after police arrived. He was treated at a hospital for cuts from the broken glass but was not seriously hurt. "All the credit belongs to my son. He managed to take control of the truck and bring it to the side of the road," Antienowicz said. The raccoon died.

Turkey's tourism industry to lose out from casino closures

TURKEY (AP) — The closure of Turkey's gambling casinos is a blow to the country's \$6-billion a year tourism industry, an industry spokesman said Friday. "The casinos should be moved out of city centres, but not closed," said Fehmi Kofteoglu, a spokesman for the Association of Turkish Travel Agencies. Parliament on Thursday approved a measure from the Islamist-led government closing

down all 76 casinos in Turkey in the next six months. Combined, Turkey's casinos bring in a third of the nation's tourism revenues and employ about 17,000 people. "The loss of that revenue should be prevented," Mr. Kofteoglu said. He said the tourism industry had pushed an alternative proposal to move casinos out of five-star hotels in cities and major resorts and into special, "Las Vegas-type" areas. "The government made the

casino closure a political issue and wouldn't budge," he said. The Islamist government, which calls gambling a sin under Islam, has campaigned against it since taking office a year ago. They had support from secular officials who feared casinos were used for money laundering. The big winner from the closures could be the de facto Turkish state in northern Cyprus, where there are 14 casinos.

Saudi weekly owners fire editors over report about Mubarak's sons

CAIRO (AP) — A Saudi-owned weekly has fired two Egyptian editors over a report about rumours of corruption by two businessmen sons of Egypt's president. A source close to the case said Friday Al-Jadida's publishers destroyed all copies of the magazine in its printing press in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, after President Hosni Mubarak's sons on Sunday threatened to sue for slander.

The London-based weekly, Al-Jadida, was scheduled to publish the article in its June 30 issue, which reported rumours that Mubarak's sons, Ala and Gamal, used their father's position to set up business monopolies. The magazine's executive editor, Fawzia Salama, told the Associated Press that she was fired Tuesday, apparently to appease the Egyptians. She said the magazine's

owners, the London-based Saudi Research and Marketing house, also fired the arts director, Gamal Ismael. "I am still in shock. There were no bad intentions to defame the president's sons," she said in a telephone interview from London where she and Mr. Ismael were based. Salama said she plans to return to Cairo to clear her name.



TOTAL OF 8 IRISH VOTES ON THEIR WAY TO PROCESSING: An Irish policeman carries a ballot box off County Donegal's Inishfree after the island's eight voters had cast their votes in the country's general election on Friday. Early polls showed a centre-right alliance is poised to topple Prime Minister John Bruton (Photo by Reuters)

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